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FPM

FIGURE PAINTER MAGAZINE

insight interview

with

Michael Kontraros

REVIEWS

Giorgos Tsougkouzidis
Sago Productions
FeR Miniatures
BestSoldiers
HeraModels
NutsPlanet
Artefakt

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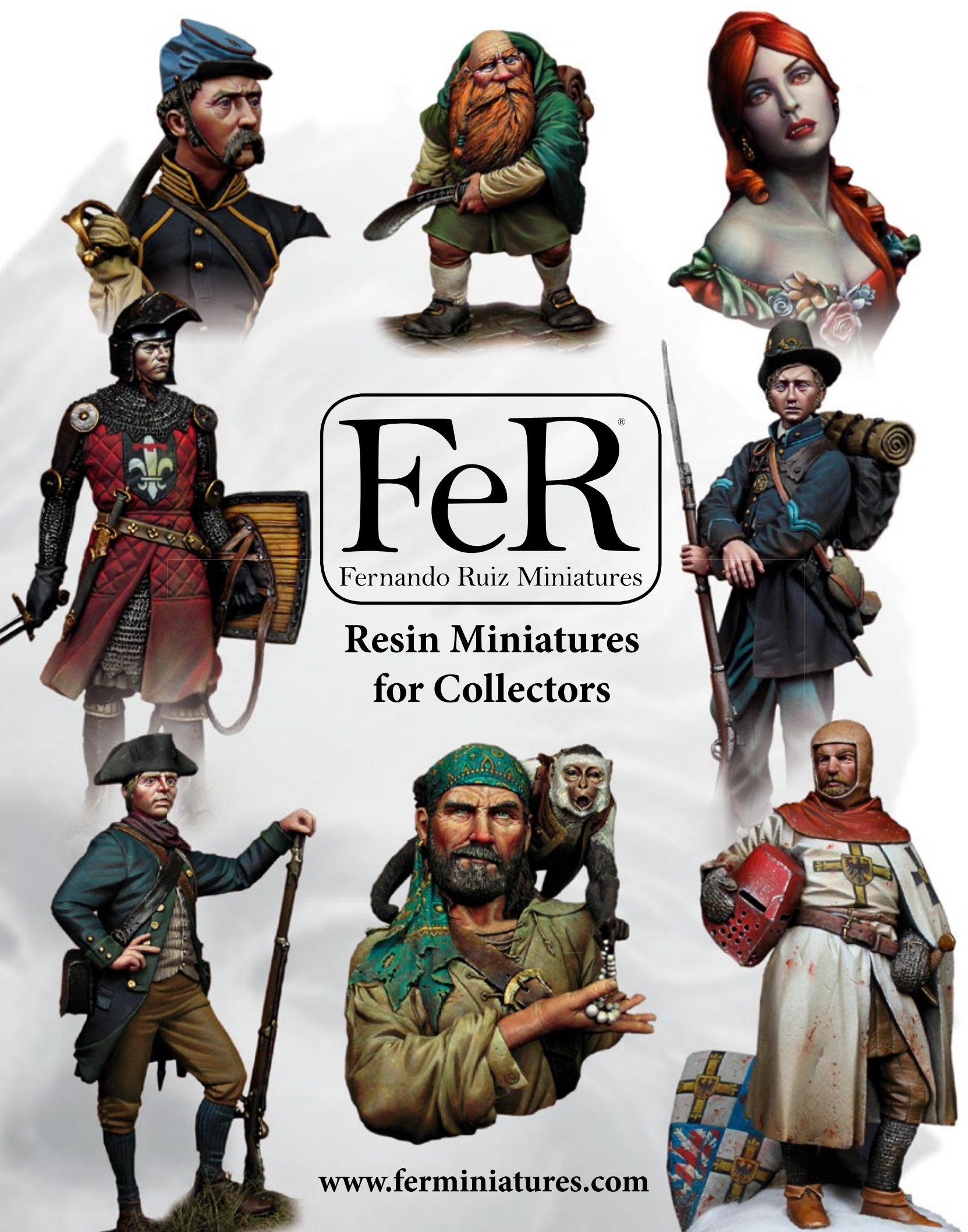
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Winton Afric
Michael Kontraros

Welcome to issue 43 of Figure Painter Magazine; the first of 2017!

We have a great issue for you this month and as you will see, our writers got plenty of hobby bits and pieces for Christmas. We have Unboxings from FeR, NutsPlanet, Sago Productions, Giorgos Tsougkouzidis, HeraModels, BestSoldiers and Artefakt —phew! We also take a closer look at the new Ultra Matte Varnish from AK Interactive and the new Leaf Punches from PK-Pro.

Marko brings us the latest instalment of his post-apocalyptic diorama and we have another really inspiring tutorial from Roman Lappat. Also — drum roll please — we finally have a tutorial from none other than John Keys!

In this issue, we also talk to a real new kid on the block; Winton Afrić is a sculptor of extraordinary talent who specialises in digitally sculpting dragons! Check out his interview by Marko Paunovic. Kicking this issue off, though, is a truly fantastic talent and a really nice bloke and winner of...well everything: Michael Kontraros!

Shane Rozzell, Chief Editor

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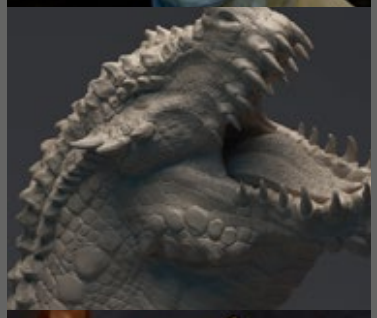

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ASYLUM WARGAMING UNVEILS NEW WARGAMES SHOW, CHILLCON.

The company's first wargames show is to be hosted in Sheffield on 27th May, 2017.

Asylum Wargaming—and chief sponsor S.L.A. Industries: CS1—will debut Sheffield's newest wargames show, Chillcon, on 27th May, 2017. Guests can not only look forward to guest speakers, tournaments and participation games, but also the cream of the UK's independent wargames traders, manufacturers and publishers. The event's participation and demonstration games will feature ArcWorlde and S.L.A Industries: Cannibal Sector 1 alongside Kings of War, Bolt Action and X-Wing tournaments, giving guests plenty to see and enjoy. They can also enjoy the event's trademark Chillcon Carni and a free goody bag upon entry.

Whilst confirmed traders include—amongst others—Warploque Miniatures, Daruma Productions, Dark Ops and Broken Toad, a limited number of pitches are still available. Traders or companies wishing to reserve such a pitch should email chillcontrade@gmail.com, as should potential partners or traders wishing to place their products in Chillcon's goody bags.

Chillcon will be held at Ecclesfield School, Chapeltown Rd, Sheffield S35 9WD. Tickets will be £6.00 on the door or £5.00 in advance, with £1.00 of every ticket sold being donated to the Autistic Society, Help for Heroes and the Myasthenia Gravis Association.

KABUKI STUDIO

Kabuki Studio is pretty excited to release the news that it will be collaborating with one of their favourite fantasy artists, Bayard Wu, to produce a miniature of his Succubus, with the promise of a more characters to come. This comes on the heels of their very successful Death Dealer KS campaign last year in partnership with Frazetta's Girls, which still has several more models to come.

Salute 2017 will introduce a couple of new things this year to push their painting competition to new heights. There is a Best of Show trophy, which will be awarded to the winner and they also get to take away a paid flight and transfers to enable the winner to enter into Chicago's Coolminiornot Crystal Brush competition. As if this wasn't enough, they are re-introducing third place awards, as sometimes the cut between finalist and second place is a painful judging decision. The judging criteria has also been reviewed and refined, and, as always, maintains an objective as possible decision making team of 8 judges to oversee the very subjective nature of an art competition across various scales and styles.

We wish you the best of luck if you are competing, and if not we hope you get a chance to have a good look and enjoy the art on display.

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by Shane Rozzell

Details

Price:	€57 / £48.65
Scale:	1/24th
Material:	Resin

Available from

Heramodels.com

HeraModels' Nythgor the Unbreakable

HeraModels was founded late October, 2015 by Diego Esteban who launched his new company with the release of the very successful bust, 'Abalám, Prince of Hell'.

Currently, Hera has 3 ranges: Old World, District 84 and their Academic line. Since the initial launch of the company, Hera has slowly added to their ranges with very high class miniatures. There is not a duff release in sight, which I think has a lot to do with the fact that Diego seems to keep a tight rein on the products and maintains a good working relationship with the other artists he works with. Their new release, a 1:24 scale Dwarf, is sold as a limited edition (250 copies) with the package containing the miniature, with an optional head, a plinth, a couple of stickers, the authenticity certificate and an exclusive poker card.

The Box

When I first saw miniature of Nythgor the Unbreakable, a dwarf, I must admit I really liked it and didn't pay much attention to the limited edition package being offered. It's one of those models where I could see how I wanted to paint it straight away, so when it arrived I was very pleasantly surprised with the purchase I had made because it came with all the extras.

Upon opening the box, I was confronted with a cascade of falling cards and stickers. These are a very nice touch that I always like to get. I know it's a bit of marketing fluff from the miniature producer, but I'm of that ilk that likes to plaster them all over my painting light and stuff... does this make me a nerd? Ha — you and me both!

Once I'd waded through all of the paperwork 😊 I was confronted with a very thick layer of foam with the corner cut out. Removing this revealed the goodies we're here for and something else! A plinth, measuring 50mm^3 made of very light wood with a black veneer, it's very striking and a brilliant addition to the package.

The Miniature

Nythgor is not one of those fancy dwarfs that like their armour all shiny and polished (I'm pretty sure he'd think those kinds of dwarfs have elf blood somewhere in their lineage). No, Nythgor works for a living which can be seen in his gear which is litany to the many battles he's fought; not an eagle winged helmet in sight! He comes in 5 parts including a scenic base and an extra optional head. The model was designed and sculpted by the stupidly talented Raul Garcia Latorre, whose sculpts I have adored for a very long time, so I knew this was going to be good. The cast is very clean (as to be expected from the likes of Latorre and Esteban) and all the pieces go together extremely well, but I did notice that there was some extra resin underneath the foot, around the lugs that help secure it to the base, so these will need to be trimmed to get it to stand correctly on the scenic base.

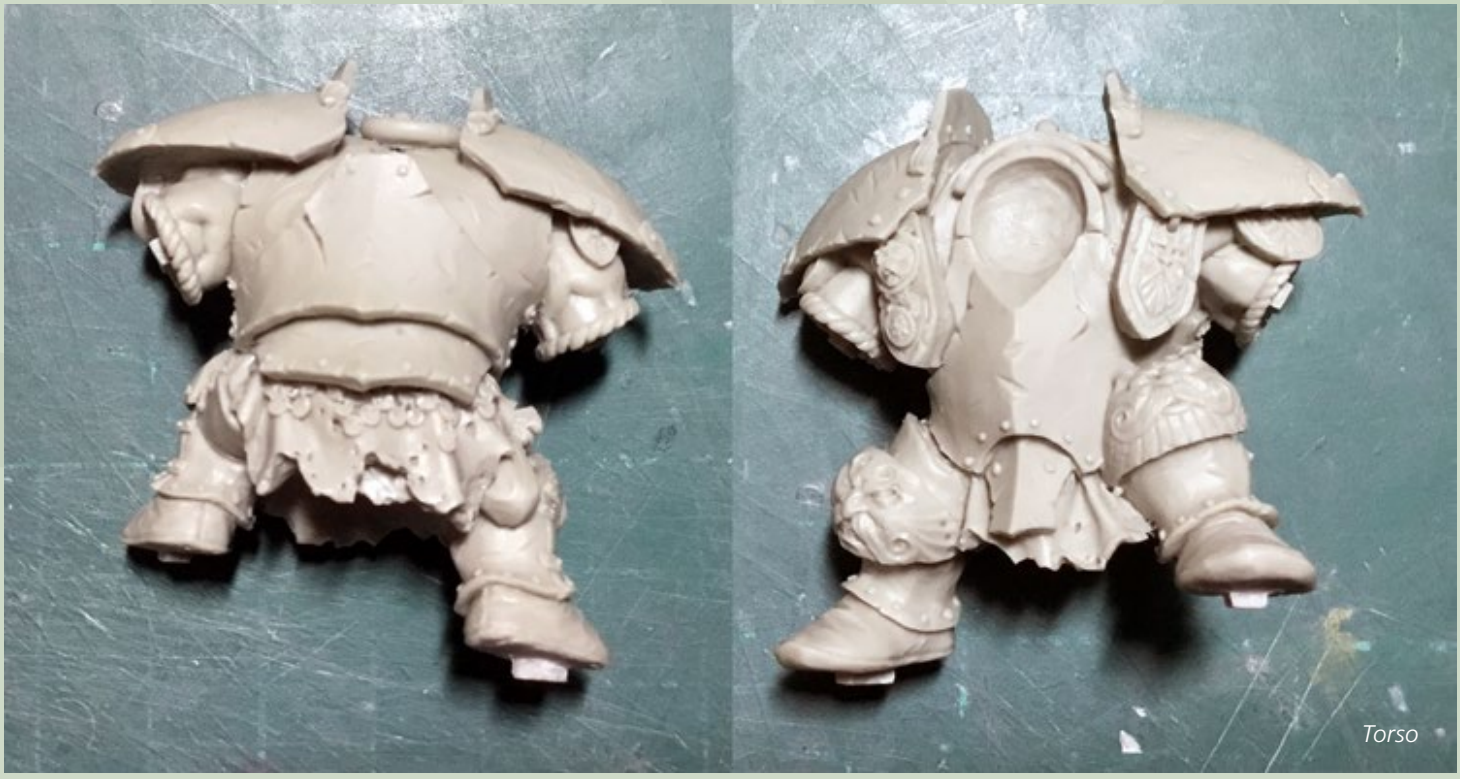
The primary head is your typical stern dwarf with a massive full beard decorated with plaits, bands and dwarven tokens. While I love this head, I do feel it rather obscures the model behind the

Heads

Arms

beard so I'm gonna plump for the second option head which does remind me of the MProyec Radwulf dwarf also sculpted by Raul Garcia Latorre, but obviously this is a much bigger scale. This head seems to be more focused in what he's doing. Gone is the detail obscuring beard which is replaced by the much more practical mutton chops (hmmm, I think it's about time they made a comeback). This head also sees the character wearing more dwarven tokens on a chain hanging around his neck. There is one downside with this head. The caster decided to have a resin pour point right on the top of his bald head, which will take some careful removing and possibly a bit of putty to get back the detail lost by its removal.

The dwarf stands upon a pile of rocks which also has a skull on it (obscured behind the beard on the two versions of the box art). In his right hand is a massive Dwarven hammer and on his left arm is a big kite shield. He supports two massive shoulder pads that have minimal decoration on them, but are chipped and scratched. His muscular arms and hands are bare, but he does wear some of his wealth on them in the form of rings, bracelets and arm torcs (gotta keep some gold handy, I suppose). He is also wearing some nicely shaped plate armour, a loin cloth and at the back a hint of some scale-mail underneath his breast plate. Atop the armour, in between his massive shoulder pads there is also a giant ring. This is where a rope can be attached to lower him up or down sheer cliffs so he can get to where the action is. The only decoration to his armour is some token metal plates and on his knees, both of which show depictions of his forefathers. I think he probably won these armour parts off one of those fancy dwarfs...maybe in a staring competition or something.



Torso

Marc Masclans' version

Diego Esteban's version

As with all high production resin models, there are a few mould lines to clear up but thankfully (apart from the very top of the optional head), none of them go over any detail areas. There are a couple of small air bubbles that will need filling as well. But, as I have said many times, we are model makers and these are kits; if you want something you don't want to work on, go buy a toy! I have started the preparation of my copy and it was all cleaned up in less than an hour. I actually enjoy this aspect of our hobby, as you get to see every little bit of detail that the sculptor has put into the miniature. It also give me the chance to 'learn' the miniature for when I start painting him.

The Box Art

As with a lot of new releases now-a-days there are two box art versions. The first is painted by the very talented and prolific Marc Masclans who has chosen to do his version with NMM. While I appreciate the skill involved in doing this (the very tight colour transitions are superb), I don't think it suits larger scaled models. The palette Marc chose for the skin and hair are very nice though. All the other elements of the miniature are painted, as to be expected from Marc, to a superb level.

The second version, by Diego Esteban himself, has been painted using TMM. Diego's version looks a lot younger than the old greying battle brother that Marc has depicted, by giving him dark brown hair. The armour that Diego has painted looks more inline (to me anyway) with the sculpt. It's beaten and worn and, as with the base, Diego has modelled has some ice forming on the upper parts.

I know this is a very subjective thing, but both artists have chosen very different paint schemes for the model which does show its versatility. I know which is my favourite and I'm sure you guys will have yours as well.

Conclusion

Since it's only February it's going to be trite of me to say this is the best miniature I have bought this year (yes, it's also the first!), but I do feel it's an excellent model that has a lot to offer the fantasy display painter. There have been quite a few larger scaled dwarfs over the years, many from the hands of Raul Garcia Latorre, but I think this could be the best so far. If you're a fan of dwarfs (I mean real dwarfs — not those 'show pony' ones) then this will tick all the right boxes and with all the extras you get with it, it's a great purchase. This is a model I would certainly recommend to everyone; the only shame is its limited availability, because I'm sure I'd like to paint an alternative version down the line.

Scenic Base

Words & Questions by Luke Wilson

insight interview

with Michael Kontraros

I first saw Michael's work back in 2011, when his beautifully sculpted 'Deck of Cards' won the World Expo in Switzerland.

From that very moment I was a fan! Since then, I have seen many projects sculpted by him, and each one has been a masterpiece. Some have been one offs for personal collectors; others have been for his own ever-expanding range. A few years ago, I got to meet Michael at Euro Militaire and I'm always surprised how humble some of the most talented are in our community. Michael was no different and when I was telling him how much I was a fan and loved his work, you could see there was a genuine appreciation that someone loved what he was doing.

We moved on a few years and the releases have kept coming, both commercial and personal. His achievements are well documented; the icing on the cake of late is, of course, Atonement! I could lament for ages about his work, but then there would be nothing left for this Insight. So without further ado, let's get to it and find out more about his work and more so, the man himself.

1 *You've recently re-emerged as Michael Kontraros Collectables. Can you tell us what the ethos behind this new company is?*

Michael Kontraros Collectibles has always existed. I just never had the time to deal with the marketing, social media, PR and generally getting people to recognize the company rather than me. With the addition of Anthony to the team, all that has now become reality as there is now a concentrated marketing and advertising effort. Michael Kontraros Collectibles 're-emerged' on the scene, quite aggressively, with a renewed philosophy, new products and new motivation.

2 *That's quite a haul of Best of Shows. Most of your work are collaborations. How do you go about picking who to partner with and why?*

Actually, all of my works are collaborations, since I am not a painter. I choose my painters very carefully: they must be good at what they do (they are amongst the best worldwide), I must trust them, I must be able to communicate well with them and most importantly they need to be a good person – this is very important for me.

Each project needs something different, so I always take into account each painter's particular painting style when selecting them for a project.

Keep in mind that I always give instructions to the painter on how I imagine the project. I have a particular concept in my head, so I have to explain and guide the painter – atmosphere, feeling, colours, but then it is up to the painter to create the finished item.

The King is Dead

Enslaved Queen

Jack's Ghost

Deck of Cards: Painted by Chris Panagiotou

Best of Show - Fantasy Swiss World Expo 2011
Best of Fantasy - Monte San Savino Show 2011

3 *Out of your sculpts to date, I have two favourites – Deck of Cards and Atonement. If you had to pick just one of your sculpts, which one would you say is your favourite and why?*

It is difficult to say. It is like asking which one of your children you love the most...every project is something different for me. If I really had to choose, it would be three:

– Deck of Cards – this is like the 'first love'.

– Freak show – I adore the theme and I believe it is one of my best quality sculpts.

– Atonement – This is the most emotional and personal piece I have ever made. It is some of my best work, as it is a subject close to my heart with a lot of personal meaning.

4 *You recently built a new studio and started sculpting lessons. Is this something you have always wanted to do and what plans do you have for this venture?*

I have a certain way of thinking. We spend half of our lives working, so if the work area is bad or negative, it means that you spend half of your life in an ugly place that does not inspire you.

As I studied graphic design and some interior design and am good at building things, I decided to make my work place into something truly inspirational and pleasant. I spent a great deal of time making my offices and studio – after all, this is a place where I spend more than 10 hours per day, unfortunately...or fortunately.

The sculpting lessons are more of a hobby than work. When my hobby became my work it was great, but it stopped being a hobby. Now teaching almost took its place, plus we have a lot of fun during lessons.

As for future plans, I want to keep expanding, slowly and steadily. One of the great things that came out of the

classes was the busts that were sculpted by the students, which I decided to put into production. This made me incredibly proud (as their teacher) and I believe it gave the students a lot of confidence to continue sculpting. Hopefully there will be more to come in the future, as there are a lot of projects that we are working on that we hope people will like.

5 *What advice could you give for budding sculptors out there that don't know where to start?*

Do not be afraid to ask for help, do not be afraid to make mistakes, conduct proper research, study and work a lot, and practice, practice, practice. Be original and be yourself when you sculpt.

6 *I see to date all of your stuff is traditionally sculpted. There are more and more computer sculpted models coming. Is this something we could see from MKC in the future or are you going to keep it traditional?*

I love traditional sculpting; it is how I started and it is something I now know very well, but I am not against 3D sculpting. 3D is a tool. However, I feel that 3D sculpts lack the character and passion of the sculpt that was created by hand...that little bit of magic that makes it personal. As I said before, it is a valuable tool and it seems to be the way of the future. I don't know how to 3D sculpt, but you never know.

7 *If you weren't sculpting and running Michael Kontraros Collectables, what would you like to be doing?*

Creativity, art and design are part of my life. It is what I love; if I had not discovered the magical and wonderful world of sculpting, I would probably have worked even more as a graphic designer and maybe I would have been involved in the tattoo business (that is another great passion of mine).

Freak Show (Scale 54mm): Painted by Kyriakos Simos. Best of Fantasy at Monte San Savino show 2015.

8 *Atonement has swept the board at shows and garnered many awards including no less than 3 best of shows: Best of Show – Crystal Brush, Best of Show – Euro Militaire and Best of Show – Fantasy – Scale Model Challenge. So, my question is simple, how do you follow that?*

Deck of Cards, Fallen Angel, Beauty and the Beast, Leviathan, Freak Show... all of these projects have won 3 best of shows, maybe more... so has Atonement. All of these ventures where done because I loved doing them and I found the subject matter inspiring, not because I wanted to win the best of show awards. As with most things in life, if you do something that you like, love and are passionate about, the result will always be phenomenal. So, how do I follow that? I open my eyes and my mind and pick a project with which I will hopefully have some fun.

Leviathan

Beauty and the Beast (63 mm / 90 mm)
Painted by Chris Panagiotou

9 *I know you have done some sculpting seminars, most recently at Monte in 2016. Unfortunately, not everyone can get to Monte and the like. Would you consider taking your sculpting seminars on the road to different countries or produce a book or even one or a few sculpting DVD's?*

Sculpting workshops are something that I really love. It is important to the modellers in person, understand their skill set, personality, teach them things, learn things from them and ultimately have a lot of fun! As for going on the road, I travel extensively to many shows around the world in order to participate in the competitions and occasionally (as at Monte San Savino) give a seminar. However, I am open to invitations as far as taking my sculpting seminars "on the road" is concerned.

To be honest, I am in the final stages of producing a 'how to' book as we speak. It is a step by step book on how the project 'Leviathan' was sculpted and painted. It was a very difficult and complicated project that has won 4 best of shows, so it will allow readers to see a lot of my secrets. In the book there will be a lot of information and tips for the modeller concerning not only the sculpting, but also the painting and the concept art. Techniques and ideas that can be applied by modellers to their own individual projects. We have spent hours and hours on photo sessions, page layout design and writing the text!

Jules Vern (65mm)
Painted by Chris Panagiotou

10 *Your works are very varied and there are some exceptional pieces that you have already mentioned. You go from a piece as diverse as Freak Show to then continue with your queen range, which seem to be at different ends of the scale in subject matter. How and where do you draw your inspiration from?*

The truth is that I like a lot of different things. I like small scale miniatures, but also large miniatures; I have many interests: comic books, sci-fi movies, history books, cartoons (Thunder Cats being my favourite) and so on...so I get my inspiration from varied sources. From a fairy tale, a book, a comic, a painting, a sketch, a movie, a poster, or a photo even, a feeling in that particular moment may trigger me. I love doing different things...so you never know what is coming next...

A great example is how my passion of history turned into the new product line of Michael Kontraros Collectibles – 'Mortal Enemies'. Contrary from my usual fantasy figures, this new product range will be purely historical and will feature high quality 75mm figures portraying soldiers from opposing sides – same rank and same battle. The figures will be sold separately, but the pairs will be released simultaneously. As you may have seen, our first release is from the Franco-Prussian War.

Quasimodo (60mm)
Painted by Francesco Farabi

11 *Lastly in most of my interviews, I like to see if the readers can get a little exclusive of a really interesting piece coming from an artist so I think we are here. I know a piece that is coming that I am super excited about and FPM readers will get one of the first chances to see it in detail in FPM early this year. So could you explain a bit about this awesome up-coming project please?*

This is a project that is close to my heart. There have been rumours and rumbles, but I can now confirm that 'Atonement' is set for a limited production run. For me, 'Atonement' is more than just another Michael Kontraros Collectible model. It encompasses too many things for me to even begin to describe, so I wanted to share this with the world. This will be an ultra-luxurious kit and there will be a limited number of pieces. I cannot go into more details at the moment, but there will be more information coming soon so stay tuned!

Atonement concept art: George Dimitriou

Well, firstly, I would like to say thank you, Michael, and also to your assistant Anthony Contorinis for helping this Insight to move smoothly. There have been some really interesting answers and of course the big first reveal of the coming availability of Atonement. There is also a book, and of course a new range of miniatures. This year is certainly going to be a busy year for MKC and I am looking forward to seeing each one. I hope you will find time to grace the pages of FPM again in the future.

Atonement: Painted by Kyriakos Simos.

By
Sean 'Jabberwocky' Fulton

Details

Price:	€28
Scale:	1/16th
Material:	Resin

Available from

ferminiatures.com

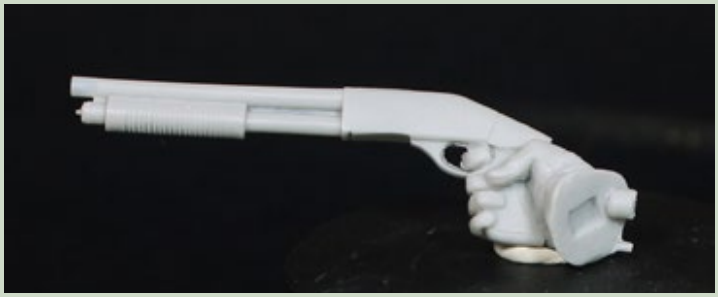
FeR Miniatures' The Executor, 2089

This is the 3rd piece from FeR Miniatures I have had the good fortune to review. This particular bust is from the Peter Punk Produktions line, which showcases the sculpting by Jonatan Monerris. It is 1/16th scale and definitely brings to mind the Terminator character made famous by Arnold Schwarzenegger. The backstory on the bust was an interesting read which I enjoyed and it was not what I was expecting! This piece costs 28 Euros, which a towards the higher end in the Peter Punk line compared with other 1/16th scale busts in the series.

The bust comes in the standard packaging from FeR. The 3 pieces of the bust are sealed in zip lock bags and secured in a sturdy snap lock plastic case. As I have mentioned previously, there is no foam including in the packaging, but I don't feel this is needed. The resin pieces are light and the zip lock bags keep the individual parts of the bust from sliding around within the plastic case, so I think the risk of damage to the pieces is minimal. The case itself has an excellent sample of box art painted by the talented Marc Maslans included and will provide a very good reference for the owner of the bust.

The bust itself comes in 3 pieces. The main portion includes the torso, head and parts of the right and left arms. The right hand and shotgun come together as a single piece and the tie completes the ensemble.

The main portion of the bust is well cast, as I have come to expect from FeR. There are no mould lines that I can see and only one small vent gate on the right elbow that will require a quick clipping and sanding to smooth out. The character's expression is solemn and determined, with the synthetic skin missing from much of the left



side of this face. This provides a nice opportunity for the painter to mix some skin tones with the exposed metal frame. The leather jacket also is battered, with bullet holes that had no effect on the machine seen on the back. The man/machine wears a rose on the lapel of his jacket. It is a small part of the piece, but definitely adds an element of storytelling to the bust and sits in stark contrast to the rest of the battle worn theme. There is a simple post at the bottom of the bust, which allows for easy mounting on the plinth of your choice.

The gun hand will require a bit more work to ready for painting. Don't worry; 'more work' for this model means five minutes instead of two. There is some flash present around the trigger of the shotgun and vent gates are found at the base of the gloved hand and at the barrel of the shotgun. The barrels of the weapon will need to be drilled out, but this is a simple affair. The casters have provided a nice peg at the wrist, so that the hand will sit flush with the wrist of the main body. This will require minimal, if any, filling to close this gap after the vent gate is removed.

The final piece is the tie which is attached to several vent gates. This will require some care to remove; there are three gates to the tie itself, which is fairly thin and has the potential to break if you are too aggressive removing the gates.

The piece is nicely done over all. There are several materials for the painter to experiment with; skin tone and metallics, leather and fur. The tie adds a nice hint of movement to the piece. The face captures to the cold, mechanical focus of the cyborg despite extensive damage to his face and body. My only nitpick is I wish the rest of the other arm was included in the bust. It looks a bit strange to me not to have the second hand visible with the gun in that position. Just my personal preference, of course!

by Roman Lappat

CLOWN

One Bust - Two Different Characters

Introduction by Davide Rainone

In the following article, Roman Lappat is going to show us a quick and effective conversion on a FER Miniature's bust sculpted by his friend Raffaele Picca. This is a clear example about how these apparently simple busts can acquire life in so many forms. Their potential is so great!

Now I leave the stage to Roman...enjoy!

Hello to all the readers of FPM.

It is me again bringing you some insight into a project I did back in 2016. The project I want to talk about is a bust by FER Miniatures from the Forged Monkey range. The original bust is “Laszlo” and I have painted two versions of this bust. One was painted as the official box art and another one just for fun. And where there is fun, clowns can’t be far away, right?

The focus on this article is not a step by step showing you my detail steps of paintwork with colour recipes. In the last year, I started to paint mainly by mixing all the colours I need from primary artist acrylics by the brand Schmincke and often my wet palette looks like this.

Believe me it is hard to explain what I am doing there at the moment as I am still in the middle of learning so much myself, but I am showing you this to make you understand I can’t give you any colour recipes from miniature paint brands, as I am not using these so often anymore.

This article focuses on the two different versions I did of this bust and gives you an idea how a simple conversion can change a whole character.

Let's speak about Laszlo. Here is a work in progress photo to show you the early process of my work. I decided to have a warm skin tone overall, but I went colder in the skin's highlights by slowly mixing in white with a tiny drop of blue, which makes it a cold white. The amount of this colour was slowly mixed in the skin tone to paint highlights. If you look close and observe, you can see how the highlights on the model start to look cold, even though it is an overall warmly painted bust.

Actually, I worked in the same order on the clown.

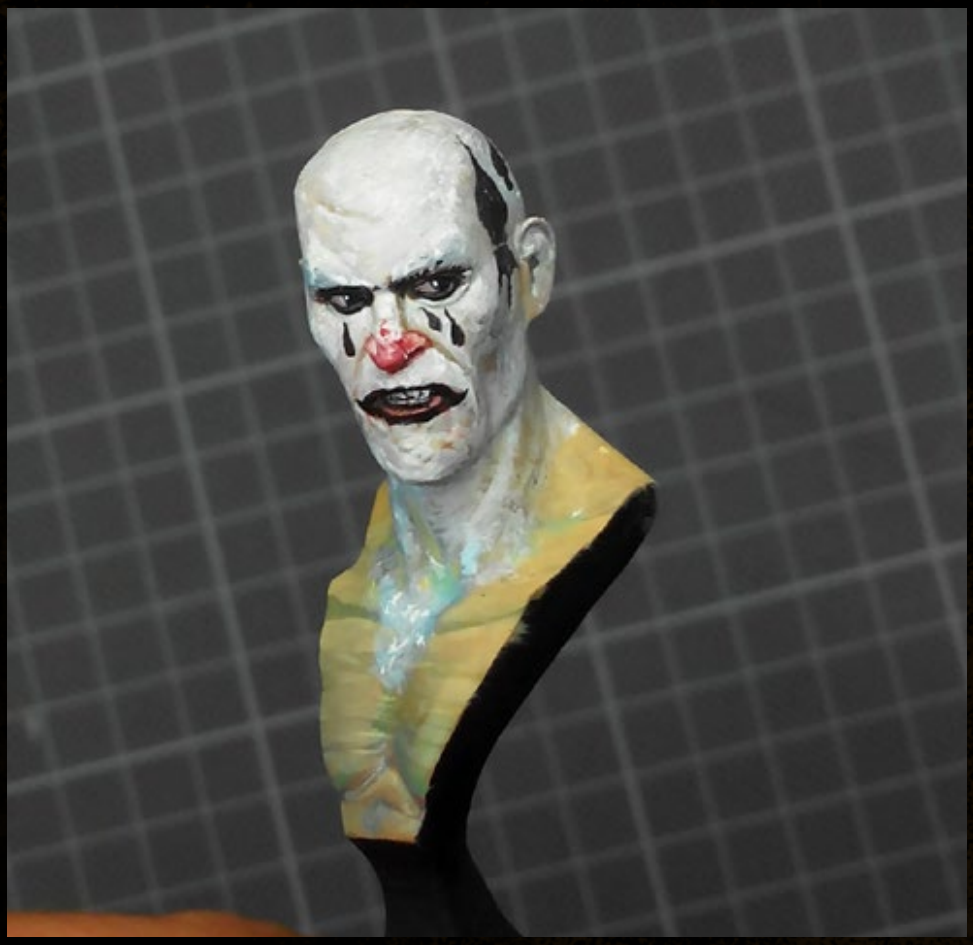
I painted my basic skin colour – which in the case of the clown has less red in it, but more green – to a certain point of the first of the shadows and highlights. I did not work any further, as my plan was to create a clown with makeup. Well I am not good with makeup at all, but since my girlfriend once helped me to be a real cool clown on Halloween I knew that the makeup is placed on top of the skin and when you sweat it can look like dry paint.

Even the skin tone can be seen through the makeup. To know best about clowns with makeup, you should have the experience yourself.

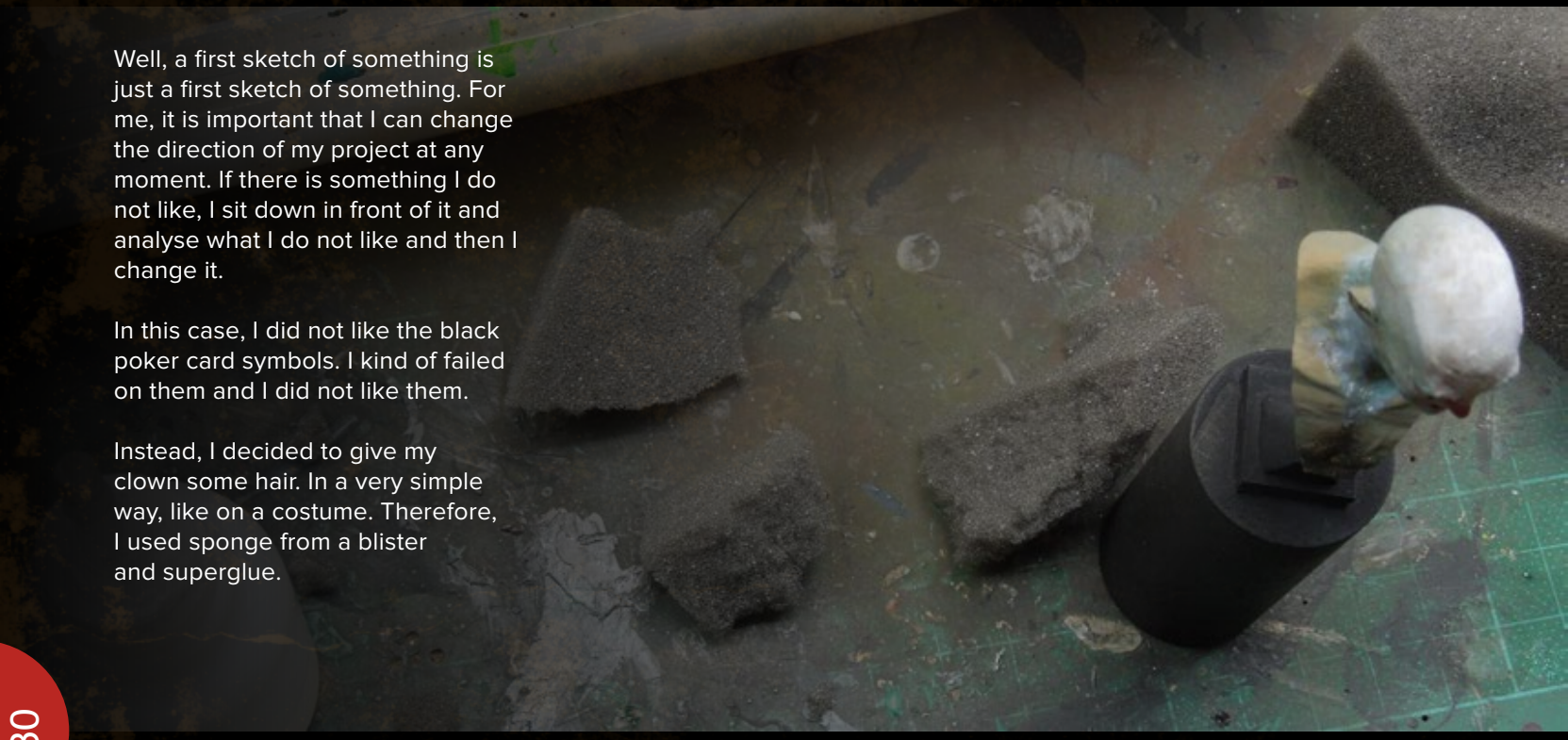
Here is mine...

To do this, I used white paint with different touches of colour in it.

Some blueish whites, some warm whites and some pure whites played the joke. I did not paint it to the face of the clown with layers or glazes. I dabbed and slapped it in an uncommon way to create a random look. If you want to make something look random, you have to do it randomly. The paint was creamy and thinned with water, like a heavy glaze. I aimed for coverage with two, maximum three layers, but also wanted to be in control all the time. If I would have gone too diluted, it would not look like actual makeup paste. If I would have gone too thick, I would lose detail on the model. With several kinds of opaque layers, you can also focus on spots by applying the paint on it several times. These spots will be more intense and pop out. Here is my first sketch of the clown's make up.



I worked a little more on the skin around the make up to make it fit together and also cleaned up some areas on the makeup that were not convincing. As you can see, I was really aiming for visible streaks and dots.



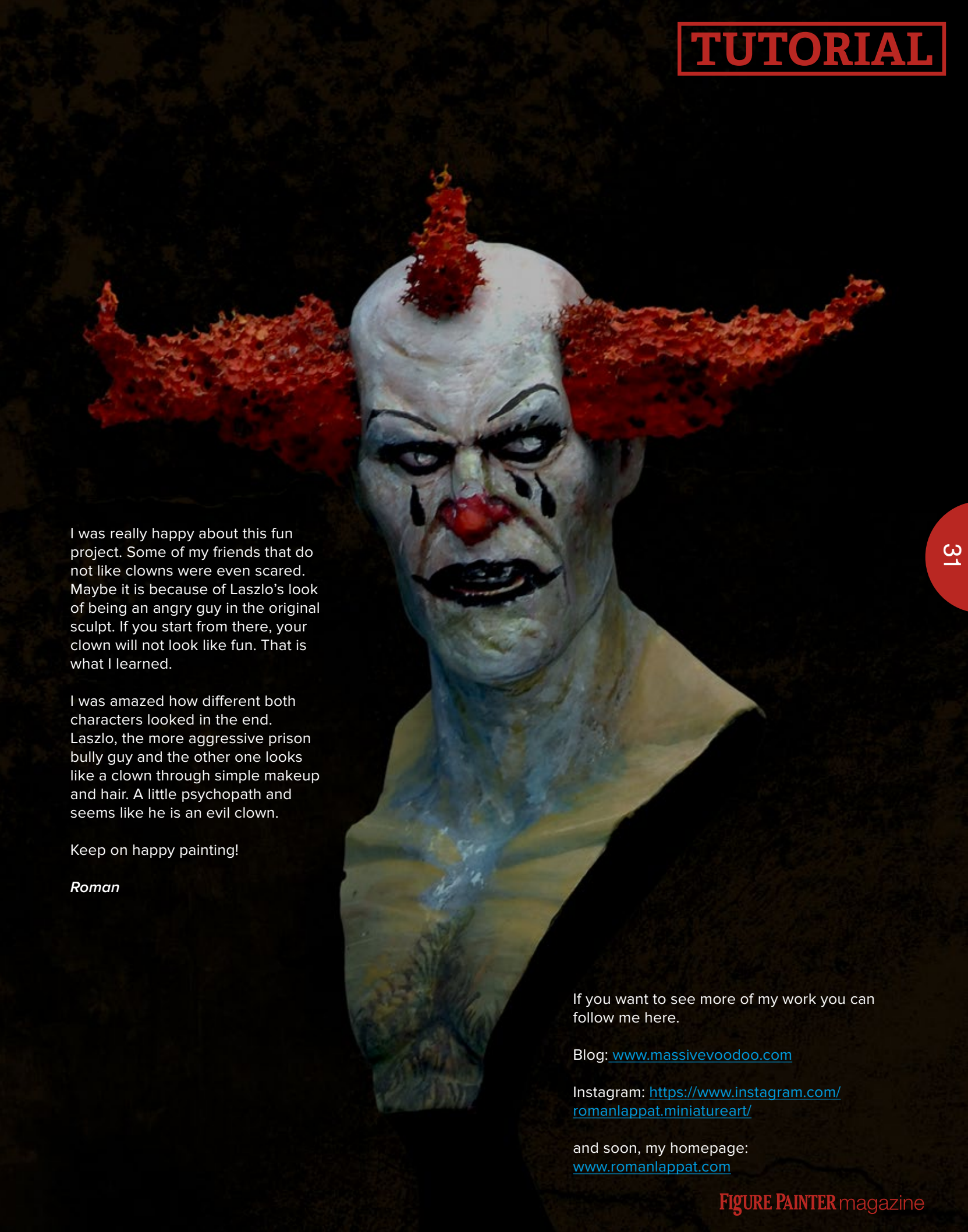
Well, a first sketch of something is just a first sketch of something. For me, it is important that I can change the direction of my project at any moment. If there is something I do not like, I sit down in front of it and analyse what I do not like and then I change it.

In this case, I did not like the black poker card symbols. I kind of failed on them and I did not like them.

Instead, I decided to give my clown some hair. In a very simple way, like on a costume. Therefore, I used sponge from a blister and superglue.

I cut the pieces in shape with scissors and – balls to the wall – glued them to the painted head.

After this, I painted them red with slightly small highlight of orange. I also worked a little bit more on the face make up. I was taking care to still keep the random look of the make-up's damage. I reworked the eyes to make the clown look like he wears white contact lenses and reworked on finer black facial makeup.



I was really happy about this fun project. Some of my friends that do not like clowns were even scared. Maybe it is because of Laszlo's look of being an angry guy in the original sculpt. If you start from there, your clown will not look like fun. That is what I learned.

I was amazed how different both characters looked in the end. Laszlo, the more aggressive prison bully guy and the other one looks like a clown through simple makeup and hair. A little psychopath and seems like he is an evil clown.

Keep on happy painting!

Roman

If you want to see more of my work you can follow me here.

Blog: www.massivevoodoo.com

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/romanlappat.miniatureart/

and soon, my homepage: www.romanlappat.com

By Terry Cowell

Details

Price:	€45
Scale:	1/12th
Material:	Resin

Available from

ferminiatures.com

FeR Miniatures' Mannaz, The Rune Collector

When you buy a kit from FER miniatures, they also provide a short background story that provides you instant inspiration. You can, of course, invent your own narrative but I must say that I find them useful and the introduction to our protagonist places him within the Viking era.

Although perhaps not the earliest use physical evidence of rune use dates from around 150 A.D., but they were largely replaced by the Latin alphabets as European cultures underwent Christianisation. The Scandinavian cultures were known to use runes for both language and mystical purpose up until the 18th century.

Kettil Runske according to Olius Magnus 'Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus' (1555) brought runes to mankind by stealing 3 powerful staffs from Odin. It was from these he learned of the magical power of runes. An apprentice named Gilbert defied Kettil who in turn threw a rune staff at him. The magic of the staff imprisoned Gilbert in a cave.

Modern reference to runes within a fantasy setting considers them both as magical symbols and as small bones, stones or gems and so the potential for painting Mannaz does not feel limited and will lend itself to practically any colour scheme.

The Rune Collector comes safely packed in a hard plastic case secured with foam which prevents movement during transit. It is a one piece bust which requires no assembly and is ready to plug onto a base

and paint. The cover art has been superbly painted by Raffa and all the pertinent information is on the box.

Something I would like to draw attention to is stem of the bust, it has been angled so that if you decide to base it on an angled base the figure will sit upright. This is a nice touch and works well with this bust, as the figure has a physical presence that works well with a looming down posture.

The character has lots of texture with a mix of fur, leather, bones, and rune stones as well as a large metal buckle. Despite this being a single piece, the detail has not been compromised. I get the feeling that the sculptor felt it did not need to be over complicated.

Mannaz has his head shaved at the sides; a style that seems to be popular with the current depiction of Viking folk. His leathery skin is weathered and scarred, leading to the impression that he has seen plenty of conflict and his head is slightly tilted forward and off to the side which relates back to my earlier point about his base stem. The character exudes confidence and is self-assured. He wouldn't need to ask me to hand over my marbles twice!

Mannaz is a more than a man. A legend told with fear at the campfire. Mannaz the wounded, the rune collector, the immortal...

Legend is, he was once, before the time he was called Mannaz, a huscarl fighting for his jarl on the battlefield in a big battle. As he was struck down in the shieldwall he did not accept his fate and refused to die. Out of the shieldwall he fought like a true berserker and put fear in the hearts of his jarl's enemies. They were so busy fighting him that his own troops could surround the enemies shieldwall and butcher them all.

He was brought home as a hero but heavily wounded. His wounds were so severe that the jarl decided to bring him to a healer. But he wasn't just an ordinary healer, he was known in all the lands for being a bit crazy, but making prayers become reality. He claimed that he could talk to Odin and Loki himself to save men and women by making contracts with the gods.

After our hero was brought to the healer, the healer prepared a big ritual to talk to the gods. Sure, nobody knew he was just a normal man making a big show to impress the simple minds. He never talked to gods. And this man would die anyway... But something was different this time, the smell of the burned pine tree saplings, mixed with goat blood. Or was it just the bird's songs in the forest?

When the ritual was over, the healer was in shock... Something was different this time! What did he do?

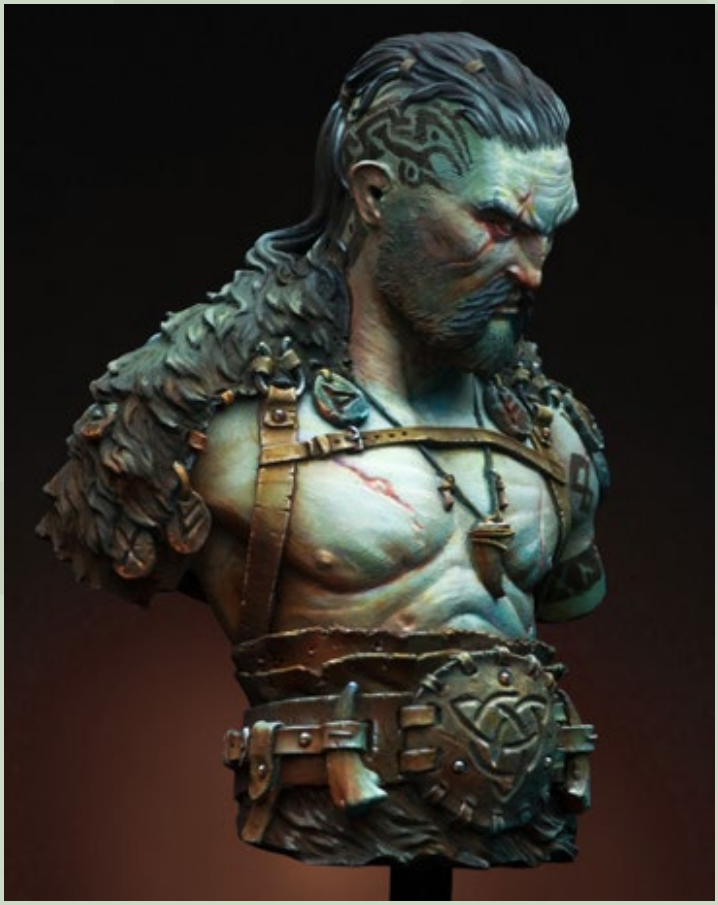
The heavily wounded man stood up and grabbed the healer's necklace before he could finish his thoughts. Every powerful man had such a necklace made of precious volcanic stone with an engraved rune to give him power and luck. But this time, the necklace definitely did not work, as the healer was slowly strangled with it, fighting for air.

The first necklace the wounded man collected for the gods was the rune Mannaz. And this is the name he was given. Since that day, Mannaz strides the North looking for certain rune necklaces. It's a reminder for the powerful people to not misuse their power, to not use the names of the gods for their own profit.

At least, that is what the legend says...

The grey resin cast is the usual high quality we have come to expect from FER products; there are no air bubbles or flash. There is a well-hidden mould line on the character's right side under his arm. It can't be seen from the front, but will need a little sanding for those painting it as a display piece.

Raffaelle Picca has been arguably the best sculptor over the past year and has again put his collaboration with FeR to good effect. He has the Midas touch and anyone interested in the Rune Collector should definitely go and have a look at the other pieces he has sculpted when visiting www.ferminiatures.com.



By Luke Wilson

PK-Pro's Leaf Punches

PK-PRO

Details

Price:	£10.20/€12.00/$12.80
Features:	Tough construction
	Works with various scales

Available from

www.pk-pro.de

I was rather looking forward to receiving these through the post after Jan Felix Meier from PK-Pro said he would send some for FPM to review. Delivery was very quick; I received the parcel in around 4 days from being sent from Germany and they came nice and tightly packed so no chance of any damage. Saying that I wouldn't expect any, as once I had a look at them the first thing that struck me is they are very robust.

So what are they? Well, here is what PK-Pro says on their website.

PK-Punches are perfect for creating a large number of miniature leaves in a short time. The created leaves are suitable for use in 1/35, 1/43, 1/48 and 1/50 (corresponding to 54, 32 and 28 mm miniatures). PK-

Punches can be used with various types of materials such as natural sheets, paper or thin cardboard.

To achieve a natural result, the use of natural dried leaves in different colours is recommended. In order to keep the natural colours of the leaves a pre-treatment and post-treatment is necessary. First let the sheets dry in a book or a stack of papers. Replace the papers regularly to prevent putrefaction. After the leaves are dry, you can produce with any quantity of leaves for your miniature bases or diorama.

In order to fix the leaves afterwards, glue (PVA glue) or PC glue is recommended. After the sheets have been glued, small corrections can be made with acrylic paints. We recommend using a transparent varnish to protect the leaves against deterioration or damage. Here, water-based acrylic lacquers are particularly suitable in matte, silk-matt or glossy.

As you can see from above, there are 3 different types. Now I'm no leaf expert, so I couldn't tell you what leaves they actually are--sorry there. I have included my usual choice of leaves which were birch seeds which a lot of modellers already use, so you get an idea of scale.

They are very simple devices, based on the same principle as the hole punch you got in school, so you could put the paper into ring binders. In this case, four small metal punches come down and push through your chosen material to create your leaves. I have to say I had a good close look and they are engineered excellently, as there was no sticking during the use I gave them in the test press.

I remember a little while back, that there were some discussions on facebook about products like these and some people felt that they were not suitable for the different sizes that PK claim in their write up, so I put this to the test myself. I picked up one random punch and pressed some in paper. It went through like the proverbial knife through butter. I grabbed two models from my cabinet. The first was The Masquerade from Nocturna miniatures. He is 70mm, 1:28 scale, and the Mayan Salute show figure from a few years back which is 32mm, 1/43 scale. I have to say I was a bit more comfortable with them on the 70mm figure, but they didn't look too wrong used with the Mayan, either.

One last thing to show that these leaves are suitable for all scales was demonstrated by a good friend of mine and previous Best of British subject Andrew Argent. He took a few pictures of real leaves to prove his argument that these types of product are good for all scales. He was kind enough to let me use them for this article.

I think these are a really great product and can see myself personally getting a lot of use out of them. Plus the fact you get different leaf shapes is the real draw for me with these. Yes, birch seeds are fine and of course carry on using them, but the shape is set and it gets a bit boring using the same shape on every one of your projects. With these you won't get that. I know I used paper in my test and you will have to paint these, but as in PK's description you can use actual leaves and this, of course, will bring more realism to your pieces. I don't think the cost is that high when you factor in the longevity of the product; it becomes a snip in my opinion.

MrBLACK
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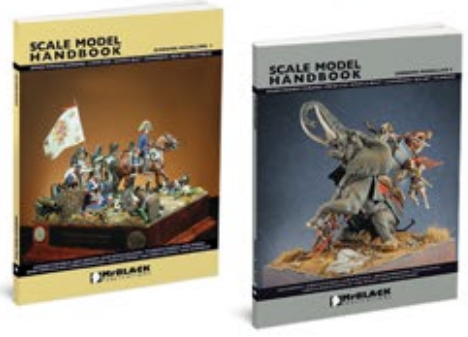

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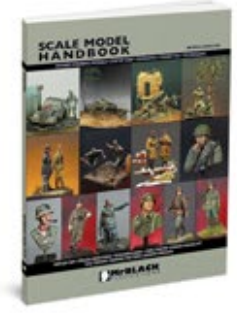

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Vlad The Impaler Bust 1462

Company:	Ellies Miniatures
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Contact:	www.elliesminiatures.com

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Contact:	www.mkontraros.com

The Scramble (Masai warrior with a lion)

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Contact:	info@alexandrosmodels.com

Mountain Man

Company:	Mitches Military Models
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Contact:	www.mitchesmilitarymodels.co.uk

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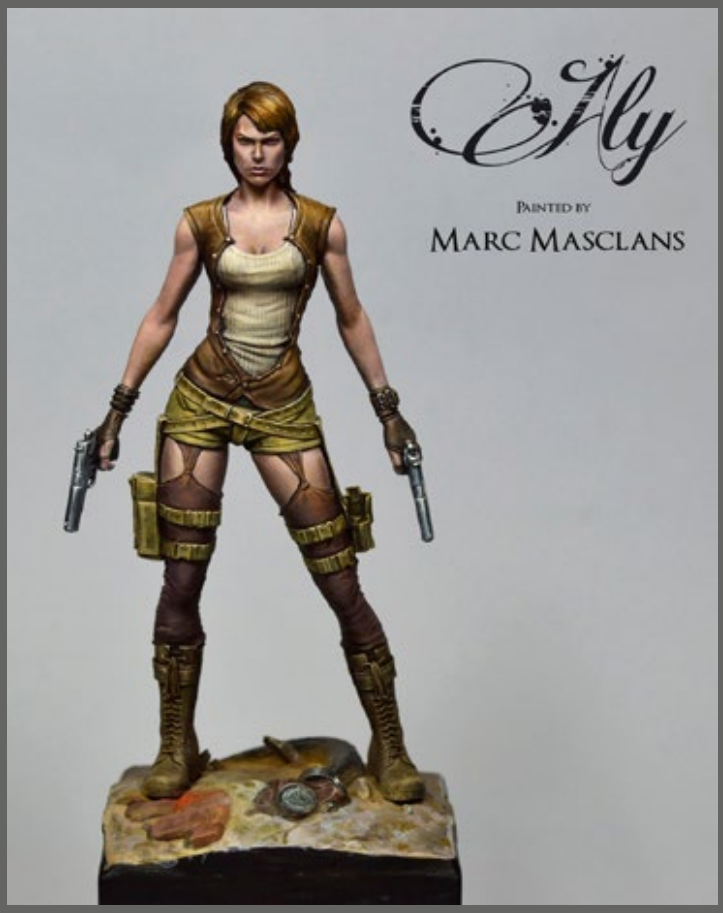


Aly, the Last Survivor

Company:	Black Veil Models
Scale:	1:24th
Contact:	blackveilmodels.com

Unboxing

by Martyn Dorey

Details

Price:	£100/$130.00
Scale:	1/20th
Material:	Resin

Available from

www.nutsplanet.com

Nuts Planet's Anti Robot Squad

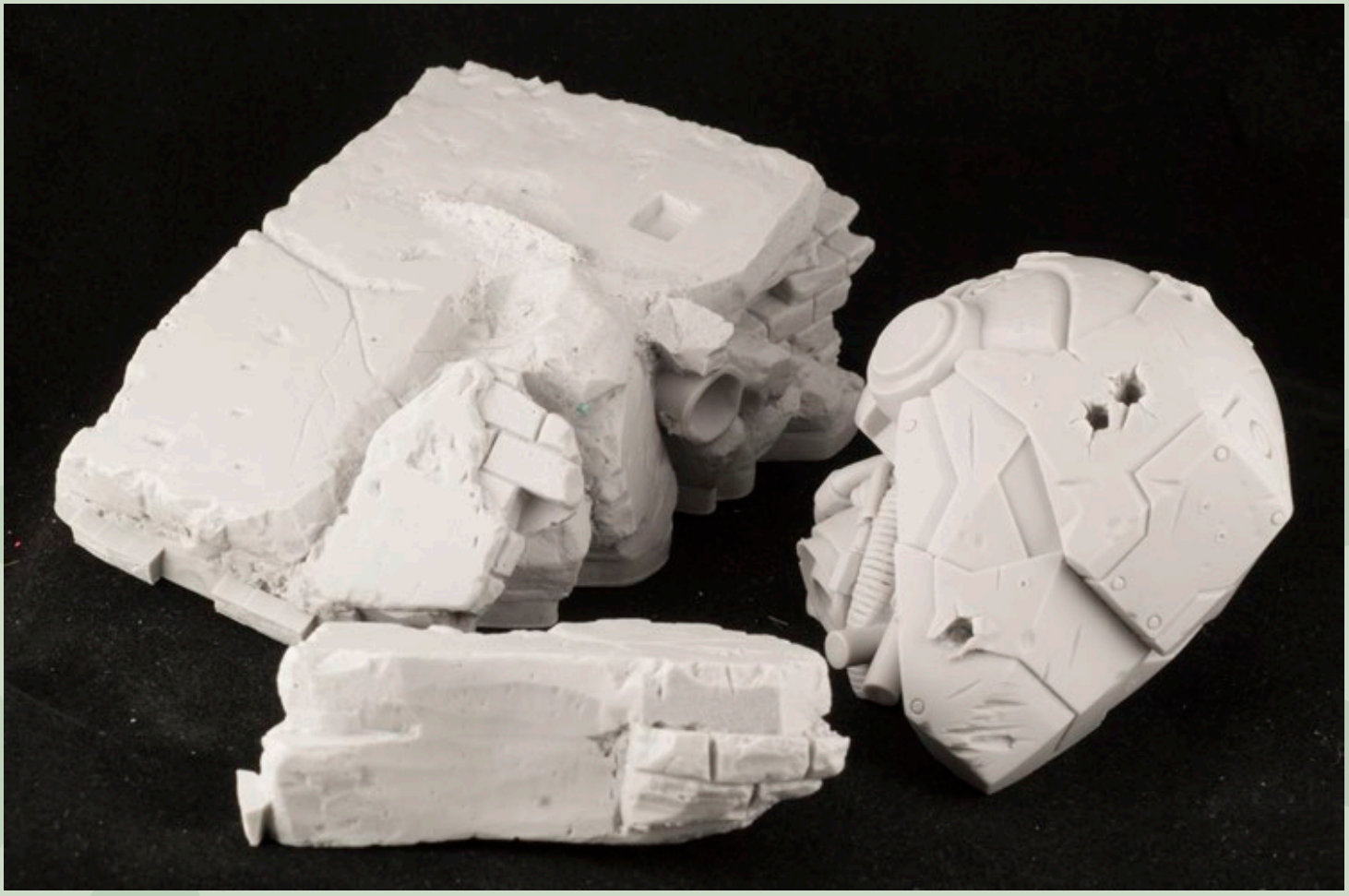
Anti Robot Squad is part of the 'Ghost Company' series from Nuts Planet and is the eighth release in the series. Don't be mistaken by the details on their website which states that this is a 75mm kit; it isn't trust me. It is 90mm from the soles of his boots to the eyes, which is the standard way of measuring figure scale.

Since the launch of Nuts Planet in 2013 they have built quite a comprehensive range of figures and busts to suit all tastes, be it historical, fantasy or science fiction with a high standard of quality to put them up there with the best and this release is no exception.

This is the first of this range that I have had from Nuts Planet. The others have all been single figures or busts, so I was quite surprised when I opened the box to find the parts wrapped in bubble wrap rather than sandwiched between the usual foam layers although I guess this could be down to the larger than normal box. Not that this is a problem, as everything was very secure and protected from getting damaged.

The kit is comprised of seven parts—the two part rocky base and robot head which are bubble wrapped and a plastic 'zip seal' bag containing the four parts of the figure (the body, a grenade and two arms).

Starting with the base, the casting blocks have been removed with just the stubs of these left in place and easy enough to remove. No worries there and the two

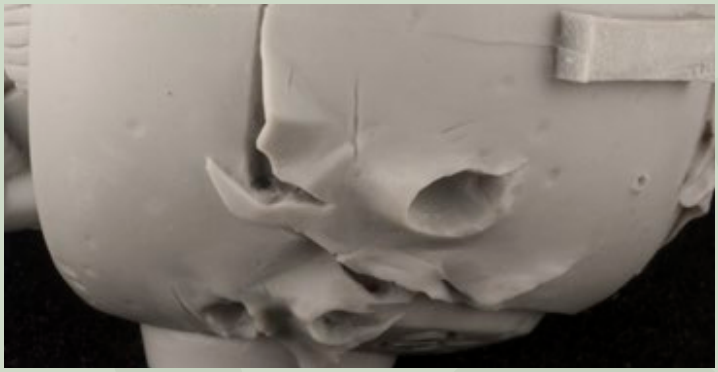


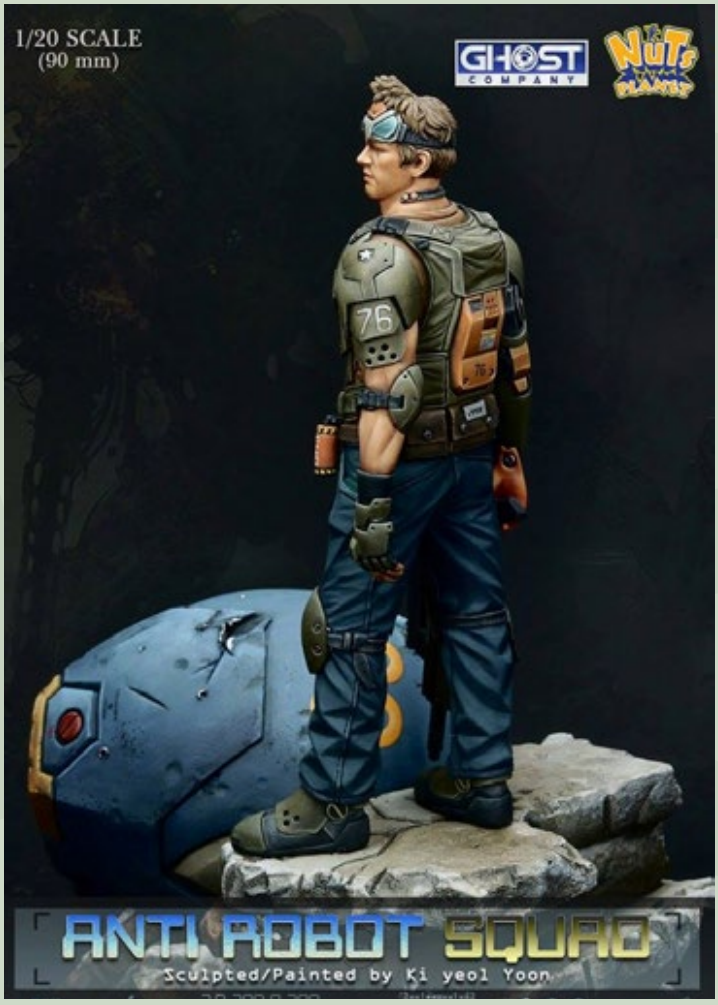
parts fit together very well. The base depicts some sort of industrial ruin, as mixed within the concrete slabs that make up the base there is brick work and an old pipe. The pipe has a hollow air bubble in it though, ☹ which (unless you incorporate this into the ruined effect) will need to be filled. There is also a small hole that has a part of the mould material inside, again not really an issue as I will simply remove the rubber and insert a bit of wire/brass rod to add to the rubble/ruin of the base.

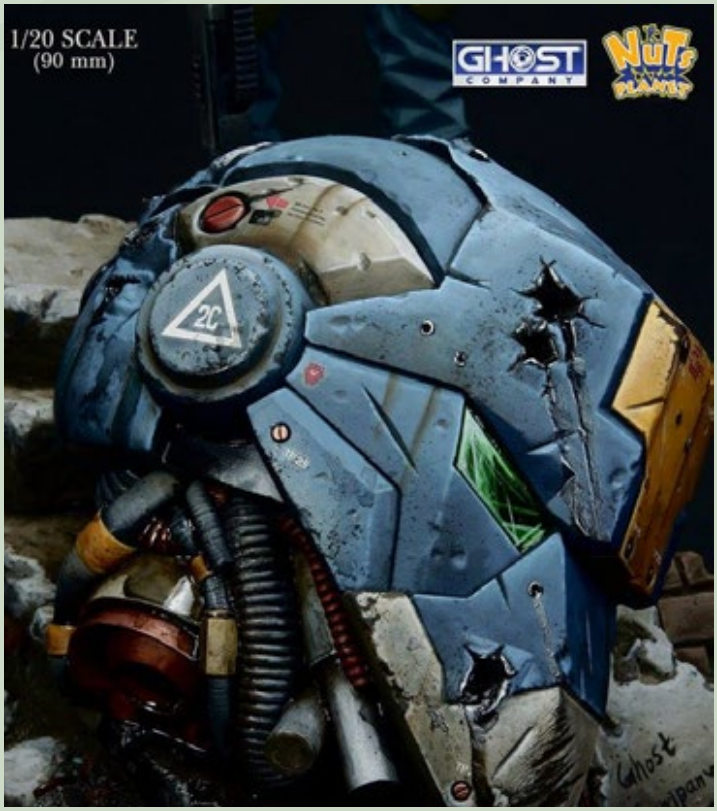
The robot head is a very clean cast given the size of it. There is only the one mould line/ piece of mould slip and that runs down the back of the head from the casting block stub. Again though, it is not something that I am worried about as once the stub of the casting block is removed, the line is on a large enough area to be blended in with a little bit of Mr. Surfacer and some careful sanding. Plus it is the back of the head which goes against the upper section of the base.

The figure itself, as I said above, consists of four parts; the body, a grenade and two arms, with one arm holding the gun. Once again casting blocks have been removed, leaving just the stubs for the modeller to remove. The only mould lines I have found are a faint one on the underside of the left arm and two slightly heavier ones between the legs of the figure itself, none of which are a great challenge to remove.

The pose of the figure is static as if he has stopped to have his photo taken by a friend to send home to a sweet heart or family and to me this is re-enforced with the gun as it doesn't appear the type of weapon to take down a robot of the size that is on the base (yes, I know it is science fiction) but it must pack some really impressive ammunition given the holes in the head of the robot if this guy did take it down.







Conclusion

A well designed and constructed model that will work for the beginner to this scale looking for a challenge or for the more experienced modeller/painter as well. The downsides of this kit for me are the static pose, but more importantly the mould slip on the robot's head and the hole in the pipe on the base. However, as I said these can and will be incorporated or repaired. 😊

by Marko Paunović

Interview with Winton Arić

Winton, a university teacher from Zagreb, is the co-founder of the art collective Artefakt. Artefakt (founded in 2015) is now made up of two key people, Goran Koprek and Winton himself. The original goal of Artefakt was to produce figurines of creatures from Croatian mythology, while also being a source of learning and teaching new technologies such as 3-D modelling and printing. In their naiveté, they thought they could produce all of this themselves at home in Croatia. Unfortunately, having put a lot of hard effort and after investing lots of money personally, they hit a brick wall. They were really pleased to be invited to and attended the Industry Workshops in London, 2016, where everyone was very impressed with the 3-D sculpts. Unfortunately, they didn't make any sales, so needed to change track. This is when Winton decided to focus his attention on producing models for painters.

Gormaz

Thank you, Winton, for agreeing to this small interview. Let's start from the beginning. What's your background? Who or what are your influences?

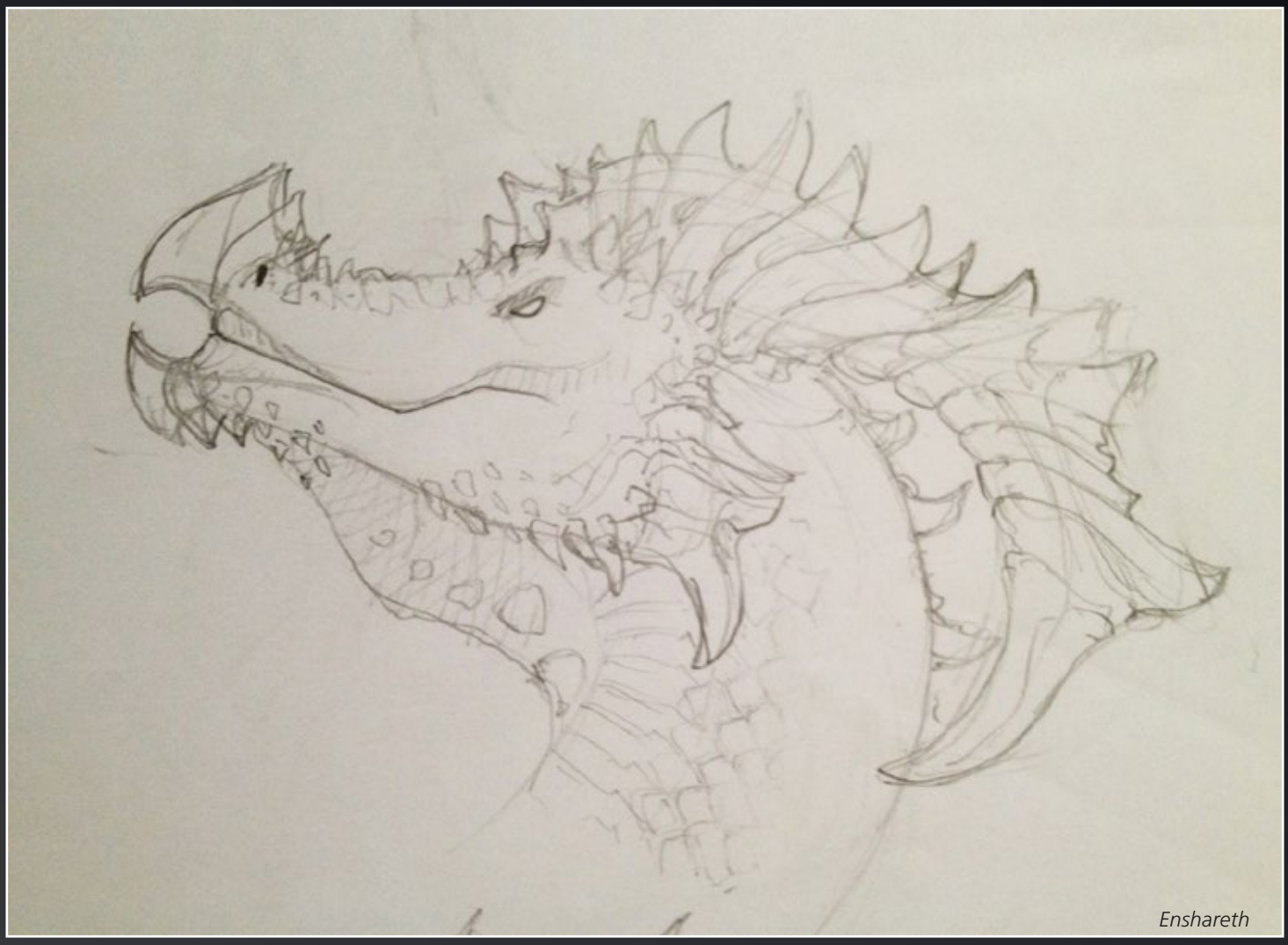
From since I can remember, I've always been drawing. I drew everything around me; people, stuff on the table, a grasshopper that landed on a chair, Masters of the Universe, various toys and, of course, dragons. The first drawing my parents have framed is that of a dragon breathing fire I did when I was 3 years old. This love of drawing stayed with me and naturally I ended up studying painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. I painted lots of portraits and nudes for a long time and discovered my passion for anatomy there. But truth be told, everything changed in 2015 for me when I discovered Zbrush. Every fantastic creature I have designed before Zbrush felt incomplete because I didn't explore and design It from all angles, as a sculpture. Zbrush enabled the best thing for me. It enabled me to draw in 3D. That's exactly how I feel a lot of the time when I'm sculpting, I just feel at home with the tools and the workflow there, much more than any other artistic medium. As far as influences go I starrted out looking at classical works, but more than that I was influenced by the awesome art from the tabletop, roleplaying and card games such as Warhammer, early Magic the Gathering illustrations, Frank Frazetta, The Mercenary comics, GURPS, Vampire the Masquerade etc. I also have a deep love of anatomy and love all good anatomy studies and Ecorche like the works of Scott Eaton, Raph Grasetti, and the crew of Anatomytools. The work of Terryl Whitlach is very special for me, because I really like her art style on one end and she did an amazing job at exploring, merging, fusing and generally playing with animal anatomy. I find her books to be a source of vast inspiration. If you look at my theme, that of sculpted creatures, I am always inspired by the amazing work of Simon Lee, Steve Wang, Aris Kolokontes, the Schifflet brothers, the vision of Peter Jackson, the work of Blizzard Entertainment and more. One of the great things about being an artist today is that inspiration is just a few clicks away on Google, Pinterest etc. We end up being influenced by a collage of artistic personas that remain strangers to us.

3D ARTEFAKT

Can you explain Artefakt in more detail?

Artefakt was born from the urge I had to make my digital works physical and the enthusiasm my friend Goran Koprek and I share for 3D printing. I asked him if he would print a head of a creature I did which we ended up making like a fake taxidermy wall mount, and that's where it all began on Goran's local produce (Chinese variant) FDM printer of really low resolution. Several prints later, we wanted to make an organization which would be able to create top quality art prototypes by 3D printing on one end and explore, conceptualize and design mythical creatures and characters on the other. We have started by doing models of Croatian and Slavic mythological creatures and in that process, I kind of narrowed it down to dragons but broadened it up from including only Dragons from myths. We will probably do other designs, but for now I'm sticking to the creatures I enjoy making most. I do believe one needs to spend enough time tackling something if they want to create something truly great and I enjoy tackling dragons. Most of Artefakt's early works were finished as 3D prints only and painted like that. However, after IFCC 2016 and some great advice which we got from our friends Aris Kolokontes and Paul Liaw, we decided to fix the shortcomings of our printer by hand. We were super lucky and got a Xbot printer as a gift, so we were able to achieve much higher resolution prints than before and we also cast the 3D print in monster clay so we could do away with the printer lines and other problems. After the post-print processing in monster clay was done, we proceeded to do the mould for the final resin cast.

Ssathraz 3D print and render (right)



Enshareth

If it's no secret, tell us something about your design process, from idea to concept through to the final product?

When designing I typically start from doodles and drawings I do while traveling to work or on other occasions. My ideas can come from animals, plants, nature photos, other works or whatever and I explore and iterate on them by drawing. Later, I will go through my drawings and when I feel some of them hit a special vibe I set them aside and work from there. I can explore them more by drawing or simply by taking them to Zbrush, depending on how I'm feeling. In Zbrush, I tend to start fresh from a sphere rather than import any other geometry and just sculpt from there. I will typically block out a couple of different dragons as large forms until I get the character right. Then after going through them all, I will choose one I like and go from there. I find it good to alternate between sculpts to keep my eyes fresh and that makes the process much more fun for me. At various stages I tend to look at my sculpts with Goran and possibly other friends and make changes according to the feedback. This helps me see things in my work that I would otherwise miss, but it also helps me by changing my workflow, avoiding some complications and becoming

faster in general. I do believe it is great to have someone whose judgment you can trust look at your work with a fresh perspective and give feedback.

So, what is next for you?

At the moment, I am working on two full figure dragons and I want to make two very different but believable and aesthetically pleasing anatomies. I am also 'resting' by doing some busts and exploring different scales and characters. I am also currently in talks with Martyn Dorey from Model Display Products (MDP) in the UK with the aim of him producing the launch of my Ssathraz dragon bust. One of my main goals currently is the upcoming Kickstarter campaign that I'm planning with the help from my friends from Figure Painter Magazine. The aim of the campaign will be to produce five of my busts in two scales. The dragons going into production are Rathaless, Astherion a 60mm version of Ssathraz and a few surprises. The larger busts will be approx. 110 mm and smaller ones 60mm. I would also like to produce a really large scale full figure dragon in the near future.

And what are your long term plans? What lies in the future for you and the Artefakt?

Ideally, after the first successful campaign, another should follow and after getting several of my pieces available we could invest into a good DLP 3D printer like the Form 2 or Solus and do the prototype production within Artefakt. Other than busts I'd like to have various wall mount 'fake taxidermy' dragon heads available and large, exclusive full figure dragons. Each dragon would have 3 variants--a wall mount trophy, a bust and a full figure, and the busts would come in 2 sizes. One of my goals is to make detailed anatomies for the various dragon types and bring dragons to a new level of believability and design. Maybe I will even produce dragon anatomy books or écorché sculptures. All of that takes a lot of time, however, and right now it's a bit of a struggle to work on my art as much as I'd like alongside my job. The dream would be to be able to live from my art alone so I could focus all my energy on designing various different dragons and creating the best sculptures I can, have fun painting them and still have time to take some commissions. Regarding figure painting, I really want to invest time and explore different painting ideas, methods and styles and hopefully learn a lot in the process.

Myself and FPM would like to thank Winton for his time and wish him all the luck with his upcoming future ventures. However, before I go, Winton was kind enough to let me have one of his dragon busts so I will give it a quick review.

The Review

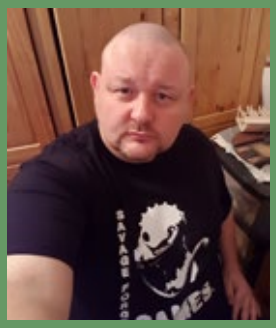
Ssathraz is almost 12cm high and cast in resin. It's the bust of a dragon that comes in four pieces. It is securely placed within a sturdy cardboard box secured with several sponges. The bust consists of the following: a round shallow plinth base, the dragon head and two horns.

The first thing I noticed when I opened the box was the nifty way the parts fit together. The parts during the design process were cut along natural edges of the horns so the whole miniature would require next to no prep time. The cast is perfect and has no imperfections, mould lines, nor excess material.

Once I have assembled the mini (or better to say, dry fitted the parts using putty), I started looking at all the small details on the bust. It's really incredible how each scale was sculpted, no copy-pasting was involved. The scales

themselves follow the pattern, which is also thoroughly thought out. The level of detail present on this bust is great. It is most apparent on the dragon's face itself. All the small teeth protruding from the upper jaw, the perfectly shaped eyes and the nostrils that only lack some smoke coming out. The base at first glance looks to be a normal flat round base. However, upon closer inspection I noticed an inscription on the front and on the back of the base. At the front, as it should be, the dragon's name, Ssathraz, is inscribed and on the back there is the cool looking Artefakt logo.

Overall, this bust oozes with character and is well thought out with loads of small details that converge into a larger whole. The price of about 50 USD (plus shipping) is not cheap, but the overall quality of the bust really warrants the expenditure.



by Norm Ealand

Details

Price:	£30
Scale:	1/12th
Material:	Resin

Available from

Sago Productions

Sago Productions' Red Riding Hood

Ever since the closure of Origen Arts, I often wondered "What those guys would do next?" Then from out of the closure, Pedro Fernandez Ramos launched Pedro Fernandez Works. Pedro wasted no time and subsequently released his own range of products in his own unmistakable style. However, Pedro was not standing still during this time; he was busy freelancing for companies like Beyond Miniatures and did several pieces for FeR miniatures. But Pedro has a style all of his own, which is indeed unmistakable in the painting community. The style we came to love during the Origen Arts period has not faded by any means. The new bust from SAGO Productions is Red Riding Hood and is sculpted in this style.

Red Riding Hood comes packaged in a no nonsense cardboard box with a quality printed glossy label, which relays all the information regarding the bust: the sculptor, the painter and the scale. It also has the SAGO logo printed on the reverse of the box.

The bust itself comes in 4 parts wrapped safely in bubble wrap pouches. On opening the pouches, I saw the torso, the head, a mask and a werewolf's head. As in most reviews, I went in for the kill; were there any mould lines, mould slips, flash, warps or any other kind of moulding issues? Not a chance!

This piece was as clean as a gangster's alibi... SAGO has produced this bust in a more than

outstanding way. Clean, crisp and sharp in every detail, there are no stray pieces of resin lodged in folds and I seriously could not find a fault with it whatsoever.

This may be down to the production standards of SAGO, who offer a casting service and before they send any casts out they put them through a post moulding clean up service so there is nothing to do when the cast arrives at your door. So I can see this happening with their retail products, too. I can very well imagine it is so, as this cast was supreme.

Breaking the 4 parts up, I took a look at the part which is the main structure for the bust. It connects the subject matter together; it has the actual red hood on it and so is the signature part of the bust. As you can imagine Pedro has done an exceptional job on this. The folds in the material fall right and nothing looks forced. The physical form is demure, depicting a youthful frame. No need to exaggerate the boobs to sell this piece--it is story perfect with a young Red Riding Hood off to see granny at the cottage. The hooded cloak adorns a very Bavarian looking leather jacket straight out of the fairy tale. The laces are finely sculpted up the front and along the sleeve and the ponytail falls nicely down the front. This ponytail reminds me of the one on the Boudicca bust from Origen, which Pedro also sculpted. It is a great

detail and fits so well into the theme of the piece.

Next are the head and the mask and these details fit together superbly. The face and hair have been done in what is distinctively Pedro Fernandez's signature style. Pedro does this in a way I have not seen in another sculptor. Each face captures light in an inverted triangle from the forehead to the chin and the cheeks and jaw line are always in shade; to me this is an awesome way of painting a face sculpted by Pedro Fernandez. Follow the light with your highlights and you can't go wrong unless you paint with a roller. The hair is styled according to the ponytail but is still finely sculpted, the way the strap from the mask cuts through the hair is perfect, parting the strands naturally. The tabs at the top which attach to the mask are positioned perfectly and fit in the grooves of the mask without need to cut and file. I am seriously impressed with the quality of this piece. The mask is sharp and crisp and from what I can make out it is a wolf mask to fit the theme, sculpted in the same way as the face. Playing with light on this piece is going to be fun.

So, this is where we move to the lower part of the bust, a severed werewolf head. This has the gloved hands of Red Riding Hood with fingers entwined within the wolf hair. This piece is not only where the arms meet the hands (which I will pin for strength in transit) but it is the tail end of the fairy tale when the woodsman hacks off the wolf's head. So this whole model will need focus on the wolf's head as well as Red Riding Hood's face. Where most need a pull to the face, this piece will need focus in these 2 areas to tell the tale of how the wolf was beaten.

The wolf head itself is so nicely sculpted. The face reminds me of the old Oliver Reed werewolf

movie when he was transforming and the Benicio Del Toro werewolf from a few years ago. It is really nicely done; the face it awesome, crunched up like it had met with a tree while running away from the axe. The neck has all its flesh and bone in place, with the spinal column and oesophagus right there. My only issue is how to attach it to a plinth without hiding the detail and the lower part of the head is going to be the contact to the plinth surface. From what I can tell, I will need to have a thin brass rod inserted into the oesophagus which will then be fitted to the plinth. Gruesome, but necessary. I also think that Pedro Fernandez really needs to make a body for this wolf head; it would make such a great miniature should it appear in its full form.

In conclusion, this bust is amazing; I can't find a single issue with it whatsoever. The only issue will be attaching it to a plinth, but I think that one is covered too. What can I say but head over to SAGO Productions via the Tiny Leads store and pick one up.

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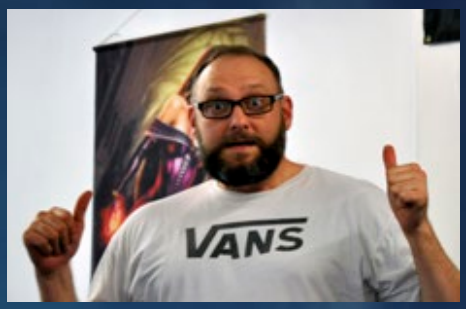
HYPNO-TOAD

by Ouroboros Miniatures



John Keys

Some time back (probably more than 2 years ago), Shane asked me to write something for FPM. Sadly, that's not really happened. Then recently Luke also asked me again, so I thought I should give it a go.

Chapter 1 – Some Thoughts

The miniature I shall be working on is Hypno-Toad by Ouroboros miniatures. I confess that before starting he didn't particularly grab my imagination, but that soon changed once I got to work. Through Trovarian's (Chrisoph Eichorn) excellent sculpting, very quickly the character became apparent.

Typically, my process starts with deciding what colour I want to paint and then I select a suitable model to apply that colour to. This time I got the model first and my initial feeling was, “Let’s do a green toad.” However, if you've been following my recent work you'll notice that I've done lots with that colour, so it was time for a change. Welcome to my blue phase!

Before starting the miniature itself, there are a couple of things worth noting. For anything other than metallics, I prime grey as I like the ease of coverage you get when applying colour. Most of the time I use GW paints for the sole reason that they're available in my local town centre.

My general method is to wet blend via a wet pallet. Enhance that via glazing (normally only the deepest shadows). Glaze different colours over the top to change the look or add nuances. To add extra contrast, there may also be a couple of areas where I will add a few spots or lines of a very light or very dark colour.

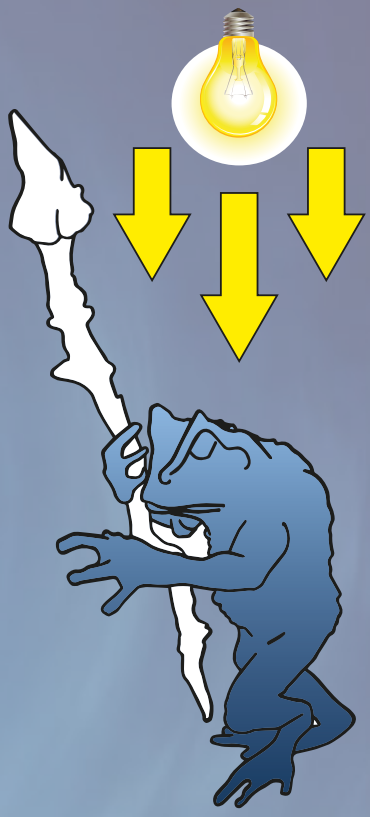
One thing that dawned on me some time ago is that for the most part we paint with light; good application and placement of highlights/shadows are key to a successful result. I paint with zenithal lighting in mind, with the light source above the miniature. Painting this way adds drama and makes adding contrast easier. The picture (right) demonstrates this concept.

This concept is used in both general terms and in detail terms. For example, I want his feet much darker than his head (general lighting) and also I want the top of his head lighter than the bottom of his head (detail lighting).

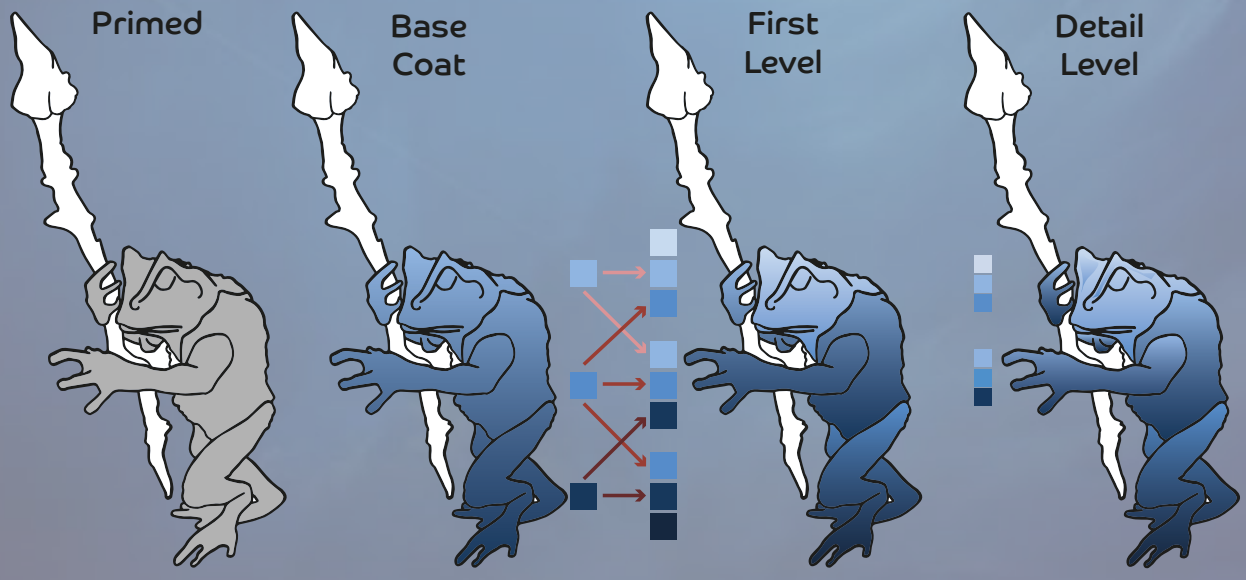
Personally, I love the reward of finishing a particular section of a miniature so I paint one area at a time, giving myself little boosts along the way. I'm able to do this as I rarely mix paints, rather just going for generic colours straight from the pot. The other secret is that as soon as I pick the colours I have a good idea of where they all go. You'll see what I mean in a moment...

I work with three basic colours-- shadow, mid tone and highlight. I then add a deeper shadow and a higher highlight bringing the number of paints used to 5. I also consider most miniatures in three sections: head, body and legs.

Zenithal Lighting



Colour Placement



Primed	3 Colours: Highlight Midtone Shade	5 Colours: Top Highlight Highlight Midtone Shade Deepest Shade	5 Colours: Top Highlight Highlight Midtone Shade Deepest Shade

Chapter 2 – Painting the Face

I decided to jump straight to the face, remembering that I'm using colours that are unfamiliar and the character of the miniature is unclear at this stage. After around an hour, I had produced the following sketch. Already I was able to see his character emerging and this gave me enough of an insight to be comfortable with the rest of the model.

So how did I get here?

For the blues —

The shadows are Golden Paynes Grey and Macragge Blue. Mid tone somewhere between the Fang and Hoeth Blue and highlights with Fenrisian Grey (where do they get these crazy names?).

For the oranges / reds —

Red glazes were done using Vallejo Burnt Red, the highest of the highlights done with Basic Skin Tone by Vallejo and for the orange accents GW Fire Dragon Bright. As you can see there's also an intermediate step with the Macragge Blue and Orange mixed which is used to help with the transition from blue to orange.

For the first coat, all the various blues were wet blended in a really quick way.

It's worth saying at this early stage that it takes a number of wet blended coats to complete the area. With each coat, I continue to wet blend but I refine where the light and dark areas are getting this more precisely at each step. So, for the first coat I wet blend the whole face. During the next coat, I'll wet blend just one area of his face, a cheek for example. The next coat just one part of his cheek and so on until I'm happy. So, for each step I wet blend over smaller and smaller areas. It's also important to let one coat completely dry before moving onto the next.

As I'm applying blues on top of blues, the colour builds and transitions become smooth quite naturally.

Once the first stage was completely dry, I applied another coat to refine the colours a little more. At this point I'm not working on his whole face, rather I'm wet blending in smaller areas, his nose, around the eye, the cheek, top of the head, crest area and corner of the mouth. As you can see I was a little more careful where the light and dark colours went:

Continuing to refine the volumes and once again taking even more care where the light and dark colours go. Having very light right next to very dark works so well. It's a stark contrast change and defines volumes, adds interest and brings the painting to life. In this step, I really concentrated on using the whole range of colours on my palette, making the transitions smoother and going from light to dark.

I continued to wet blend, refining the colours and shadow / highlight placement. In this step you can now see the full range of blues, from the deepest shadow to the lightest highlight. By now I was working in tiny sections, getting each one just right (at least to my preference).

I then started to add some of the orange / blue mix and pure orange in his ear thing and along the head ridge. Colour theory tells us that blue *vs* orange/yellow works well, so adding this colour makes things much more interesting because it adds temperature and colour contrast.

From this view you can see that from a blue point of view I've balanced out the right and left side of his face. However, the right side of his face has a nice red tinge making his skin look transparent, whereas the left side of his face is just plain blue.

To achieve the translucence effect, I glazed some Burnt Red onto his upper lip area. As you can see, the addition of the red has taken away some of the light that the Fenrisian Grey added. It's looking quite obvious that I've glazed red onto his lip.

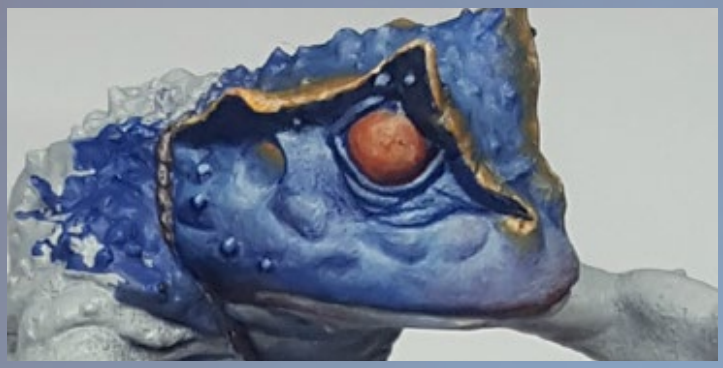
To bring back the light, I then glazed Fenrisian Grey over the top of the red. This brings the light back and adds lots of depth to the colour.

Using the same technique, I glazed reds and then blues onto his face in various places. This adds extra interest and gives the impression that he's got some blood under his skin.

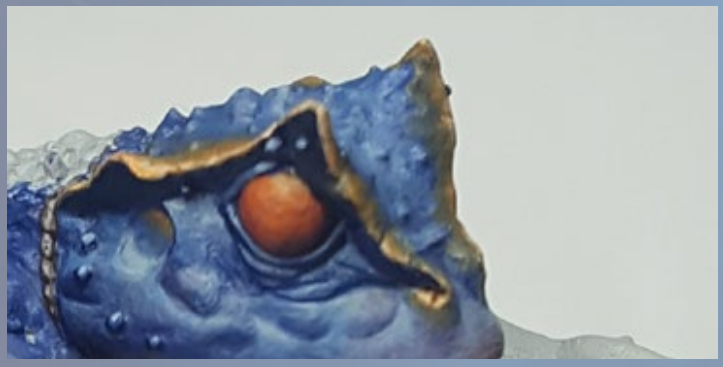
Chapter 3 – Painting the Eyes

Keeping harmony across the miniature, the eyes are painted using the same colours as the head ridges but with the addition of S75 Fantasy Games Lilith Yellow. The addition of the yellow ups the light levels and pushes the contrast a little more.

The first coat tended more towards the orange and red side of the mix which I wasn't so happy about, as I felt that it needed more yellow.



Another coat smoothing things out, but still not quite yellow enough. For sure it's smoother, but too dark for my liking.



For this coat, I really pushed the yellow and I'm much happier.

Now I'm happy with the general colour. I then painted in a black shape edged with pure Lilith Yellow. That tiny yellow line around the black really helps to give the impression there's depth to the eye.

The addition of Hoeth Blue spots using a cocktail stick ties the eye into the skin. A final coat of Vallejo gloss varnish finishes it all off nicely.

Chapter 4 – The Body and Back

Using the same colours shown for the head, I then proceeded to paint his body. As I wanted his chest to be pale, I painted exactly the same as I did for his head. However, as I wanted his back darker I used more of the shadows and less of the highlight colours. As previously shown, it took a number of coats to get things smooth and how I wanted them to look. Remembering to constantly push the light/dark contrast, I added some red glazing in the final stages.

As you can see from these pictures (particularly on his left side), each stage pushes the range of colours.

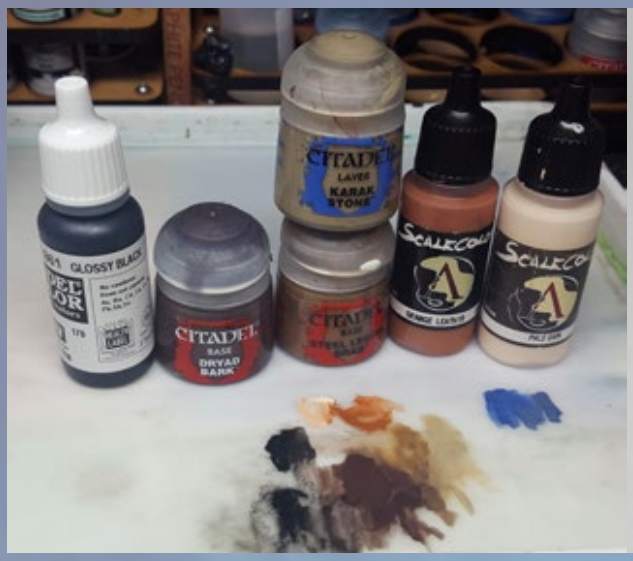
I'm fond of giving these creatures red armpits and this toad is no exception. In glazing the Burnt Red into the armpit, I add colour and once again give the skin some transparency. As with his nose area, I glaze blues over the reds to bring back the light that I lost with the addition of the red glaze. I may even add a couple of very tiny lines or spots of pure Basic Skin Tone just to give the impression that skin is catching the light.

Using the Burnt Red and a mix of Burnt Red and Basic Skin Tone his nipples were then painted, surrounding them with a very fine line of the deepest blue. They were completing with a tiny spot of Basic Skin Tone.

I finished that section by painting the bones using Skavenblight Dinge, Dawnstone, Karak Stone, Steel Legion Drab and Vallejo Basic Skin Tone.

Chapter 5 – Waist area: Leather, Cloth and Mushrooms

I admit I got a bit carried away with this stage and forgot to take some work in progress photos, d'oh! But I did remember to take a picture of the paints I used. For the leather pouch, I used the colours in the picture below. You'll notice that for the black I use Vallejo Glossy Black, which gives a brilliant impression that the leather contains natural oils and gives an aged patina. As the S75 colours dry extremely matt, I like to add them too; this makes the leather look worn and knackered. With this this approach, you get light/dark and matt/gloss contrast. The S75 paint was stippled on using an old cut down W&N No.7 brush. Stippling adds loads of texture, which increases the contrast even more.



For the cloth I used the following colours (the one with a dodgy label is Skavenblight Dinge). The brown was glazed on to the lower parts of the cloth to add dirt and grime.

And finally the mushrooms –

Chapter 6 Legs and Feet

I'm not going to lie; I admit I found this a very tricky stage for reasons that will become apparent. Remembering the guide from Chapter 1, his legs need to be much darker than the rest of him but I also wanted to maintain the look of transparency that his face and body got. Dark blue and transparency turned out to be tricky!

The highlight colour for the legs is the body's mid tone, the mid tone is the body shadow and the deepest shadows. Well, that's where I sucked. For the shadows I could have just used black but didn't want to do that as it wouldn't have given the impression of translucency.

To get the transparent look, I decided to glaze a deep red colour into the shadows, but as it turns out that didn't work. After a few nights of frustrating painting I changed the shadow colour to a dark purple, GW Naggaroth Night, and boom the problems were sorted.

The following pictures are just the blues applied as before, but just using the darker end of the scale. Actually, it's not looking bad at this stage, but I wanted to push the paint job further to add some bells and whistles.

This is the best I managed to get it looking with glazing Burnt Red! To say I wasn't happy with the effect is an understatement! To me it looks all kinds of wrong; there's no harmony between the blue and red, it has no translucency and to be frank it makes me shudder. To cap it off, I repainted those feet 3 times with these colours trying to find some balance and blending that would make them work.

OK, so it's not working, let's work out why...

If his legs and feet are a deep blue, adding red over the top will look wrong as it's turning the skin red without thought to the underlying colour. In other words I turned it red at the expense of the blue. Colour theory helps here. If red and blue are mixed, we get purple. Hence, changing the red glazing to a purple shadow things should work out better and give me the effect I'm looking for.

And here it is –

Chapter 7 Hands

It's true that our natural tendency is to look at the face and hands of a mini. So, it's important to concentrate in these areas even if the quality isn't as high elsewhere. Having quality hands and faces can deceive us into thinking the whole mini is painted to the standard, even if it's not.

Rather than continuing with the blue theme and using my newly discovered knowledge from the feet, I decided that his hands would look better blended into a purple colour.

These following steps have used Naggaroth Night, Genestealer Purple, Slaanesh Grey and a little Basic

Skin Tone from Vallejo alongside the standard blues as before.

I continued the blues up his arm using more or less the full range of colours, from the deepest shadows in his armpit to Fenrisian Grey on the upper areas. Once at the hand, I transitioned into the purple palette. The following picture was taken after a couple of coats.

As with the other steps, I continued to push the shadows and highlights only finishing when I felt happy with the results. For his fingers I was really trying to get a balance between the blues, purples, light and dark areas. Once there I glazed a little Burnt Red into a few points just to add extra depth.

Both arms and hands were painted in this way, but just at different stages.

Chapter 8 – The Staff

Just to make life a bit easier due to access issues, the staff was glued on towards the end of the paint job. I spray primed it prior to sticking it on.

The wood of the staff was painted using Dryad Bark (a lovely desaturated brown) for the shadows, Calthan Brown or Steel Legion Drab for the mid tones and Karak Stone for the highlights.

As always, I wet blended them working out where I wanted the light and dark areas as I went along. Two different mid tones were used just to add some extra interest.

With these colours only one or two coats is needed to give it the wood look I'm aiming for. To add extra depth in the shadows, I applied some GW Agrax Earthshade since it dries a little glossy.

Wanting to keep harmony across the whole miniature, I could have painted the mushrooms using either reds or blues. As there's so much blue on the toad itself I went down the red, orange and yellow route. Typically, I would have used the same recipe from the eye, but due to a recent trip to my GW store where I bought some new colours I changed things a little. Hence, I used Vallejo Burnt Red, GW Jokaero Orange and Zamesi Desert putting the yellow on the very edge of the fungi to make it look like fresh growth.

For the top mushroom I used a similar recipe as for the rest of the fungi but to add extra depth in the shadows I mixed in a green colour, GW Castellan Green. I'm sure by now you know what I'm going to say about how I applied it...

However, to add extra interest very faint lines of the yellow were added around the rim.

At this stage I sent some pictures to Luke, as I was getting pretty excited that he was close to being finished. A fresh set of eyes saw something that I missed. The large mushroom looked boring and unfinished. That was quickly sorted with some mushroom coloured paint and a sponge...

As I wanted the sponge marks to be really crisp, the paint wasn't watered down at all. It went straight from the pot to the sponge to the mushroom. Adding water to the paint would have made it look more like a smudge than a speck of colour.

To bring the elements of the mushroom together, I gave it a good wash of GW Agrax Earthshade.

Chapter 9 – Final Words

So there you have it, how I paint a miniature. With a clear picture in your mind of colour and light placement, the use of harmonious colours throughout and some careful brush work, it's more than possible to paint something very pleasing to the eye.

Remember, we paint with light and it will take more than one coat to get it looking right. If the first stage doesn't look right, keep going and refining things until you're happy with the results. Having quality painted hands and faces are vitally important. Finally, if something doesn't work, don't freak out. Work out why and do something about it!

I'll maybe do a basing article in 2 years' time – Shane you can hold me to that!

What's on the Market?

Details

Price:	€4.90 for 60ml
Features:	Can be brushed on
	or with an airbrush

Available from

www.ak-interactive.com

AK Interactive's Ultra Matte Varnish

By Terry Cowell

I was first introduced to AK Interactive's Ultra Matte Varnish (UMV) during a painting SeminART with Pepa Saavedra, so when it arrived for product testing I was already looking forward to playing with it having already witnessed some of the results that can be achieved.

At FPM, we try to give an honest evaluation of the products we receive and so I wanted to examine it against a few other similar products before offering my opinion.

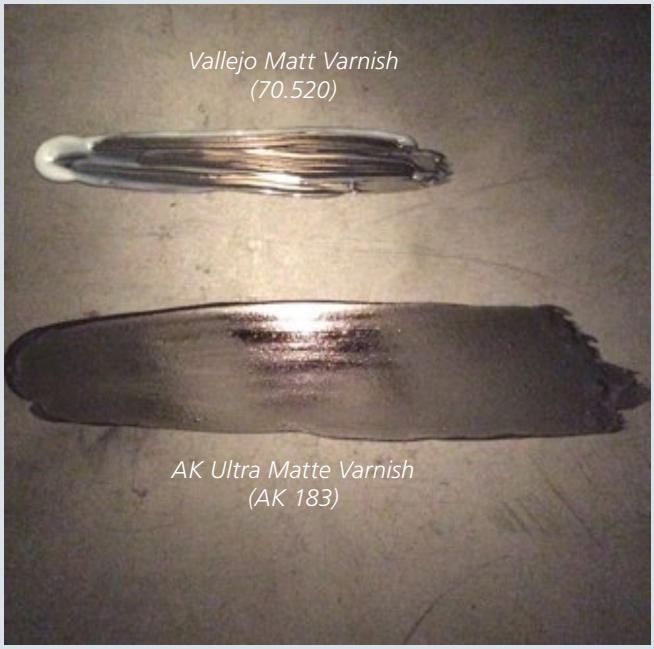
So what do we look for in matte varnish? For the scale modeller, we use it to control the amount of reflection we have coming off a particular area to increase the realism (for example, we don't want a shiny woollen tunic) or to add another level of contrast (a gem will appear shinier against a matte surface).

Secondary uses include using the varnish to increase the fluidity of our paint or act as an adhesive for pigments.

The first thing I note is that it comes in a 60ml dropper bottle; 17ml is the standard size of most dropper bottle acrylic paints. This is going to last you a few months if you are a regular painter.

Consistency – Some acrylic varnishes are quite glue like, but this one is a pleasing milk like consistency. I know that there are painting tutorials that say you should thin your paint to the consistency of milk, but I will be the first to say we should thin our paints to the consistency of UMV 😊 This gives us the advantage of not creating a glue like mixture when working with glazes. If you are working with very thin glazes, I would still advise adding a little water to the mix, but this is as close as I have seen it.

In the pictures the bottom examples are UMV.



Airbrush Use – the other advantage to the thinner consistency is, of course, that it runs through your airbrush nicely. You can load it straight into your airbrush and during testing I had no problems running it through my Iwata Eclipse on a low pressure. I would advise that you treat it like paint, though. In other words, clean after every use. Like paint, if you don't clean often it will start to clog.

The results were as good as my favourite aerosol matte spray with the advantage of having much more control. Although I did an overall spray test it would have been easy to focus the spray on a small area of the model.

Adhesive Quality – I mixed a little UMV with a dark mud pigment and easily made a satisfying fresh damp mud mix and applied a little to the rims of my German guy's boots. I then dabbed on a little brick mix over the top and dried it in place. I then lightly dusted an urban pigment over some lower areas of the boot. I gave a light spray of UMV with the airbrush and once dry, the pigment was still there held in place.

Gloss Reduction – This is the primary reason we look for a decent matte varnish and this, in my opinion, is where it really excels. I painted 3 squares in red and then 3 more in black as you can see.

The first square is the acrylic paint before any matte varnish is used. The second is where I have applied the medium I was using before I began using UMV (Vallejo Matt Varnish). As you can see there is a considerable sheen reduction but the final squares show where I have used UMV. The sheen has been reduced substantially more than the second squares. The finish dries flatter and the colour appears richer.

Final thoughts – UMV for me has no comparison. It is excellent value for money and most importantly it out performs all the other matte varnishes I have tried previously and can be used like a matte medium. For the price, I would recommend everyone giving it a try. It's a worthwhile addition to the modeller's toolbox and I will be using it myself from now on.

By Luke Wilson

Details

Price:	£34/€40/$42 + P&P
Scale:	1/24th
Material:	Resin

Available from

giorgostsougkouzidis@gmail.com

Giorgos Tsougkouzidis' Urlgan Orc Beserker

Giorgos Tsougkouzidis has been around for a while now, quietly building his catalogue of miniatures. Well, when I say miniatures that is an understatement. He has become known for sculpting large scale busts. Although I have been a fan of his skill I have always been personally daunted by the sheer size of his stuff, coming originally from a 32mm background and only venturing into larger scale stuff over the last 6 to 7 years proper. I first got to see one of his pieces at EuroMilitaire in 2014 when Kyle Cruickshank impressively painted one of Giorgos' sculpts of an alien bust and who incidentally did the box art for this release.

From then on, I followed his progress always hoping for him to produce smaller work. I spoke with him a few times and he said he had something planned, which turned out to be an ape, based I thought on Cesar from Planet of the Apes. I grabbed this but to date haven't painted it!

He then went on to produce many large scale busts again and I kept bugging him to do smaller ones, along with others I would imagine. Then out of the blue he contacted me to say he had something I would be interested in and would FPM like to be given the exclusive review for a piece he had been working on. Obviously I jumped at the chance. Giorgos then told me he had been working with a company to have one of his large scale pieces scanned and reproduced

to a size more suited for the smaller scale painters like me.

The piece was Urlgan the Berserker. Up to now he had only been available as a behemoth 18.5cm tall piece, so I was excited to see this in a smaller scale.

Urlgan arrived nicely and securely packed; he comes in a brown cardboard box with Kyle's box art shown on a glossy label with all the contact details for Giorgos and on the back the company that did the 3D scanning called 3Dhub. Incidentally, Giorgos told me that only mine is called Urlgan. He names each one individually and writes the name on the label, which is a nice touch!

He is a simple 2 part model. It consists of the main body and a top knot. Looking over the model I could only find 2 areas that needed a little work. The first on the chest areas there was a small piece of flash and secondly there were a few mould lines on the shoulder pad. Both would be very easy to remove with a knife and file. To do all in all we are talking about maybe 10-15 minutes prep.

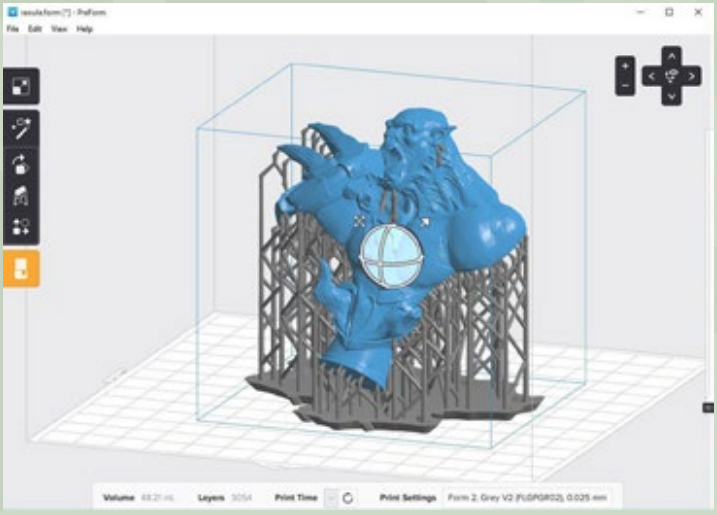
The overall detail is very nice, with some good areas of skin to get maybe a few tattoos in, with a massive shoulder pad and belt detail to add more interest to the piece.

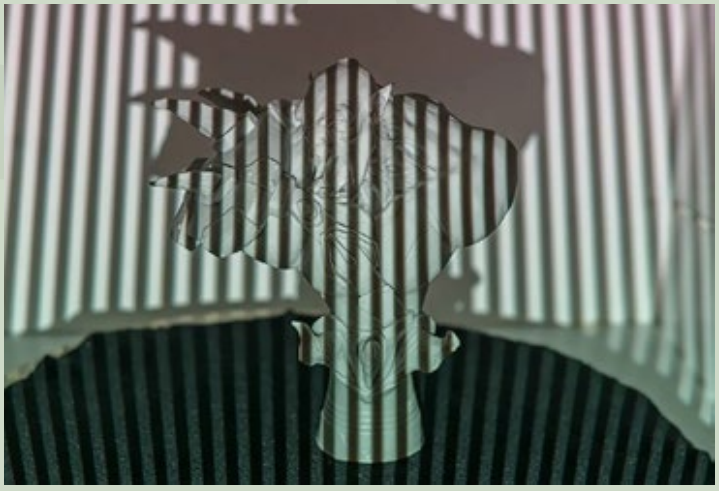
On to putting Urlgan together, there are no problems with the assembly. The top knot goes into place nicely and there is no filling needed, as the pieces fit snugly together. Other than that, there isn't really anything else to do accept paint him and mount him on a base.

As I said earlier, this piece was a 3D scan of the original hand sculpted berserker by Giorgos.

The company that did the 3D scan are called 3Dhub in Giorgos' home county of Greece, and can be found at www.3Dhub.gr

They offer a range of services including 3D design scanning and printing. This is from their site.



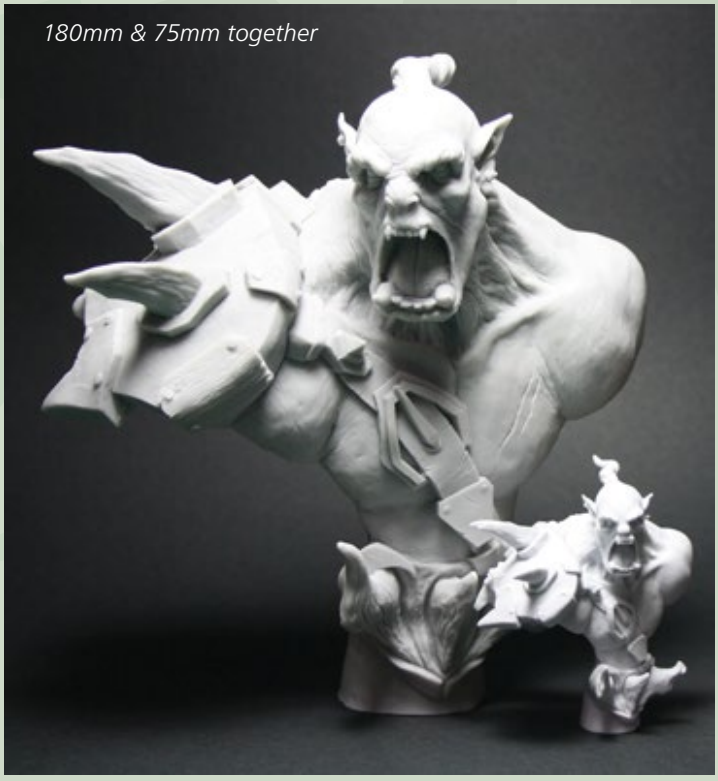


3D Scanning

We accurately capture, copy and digitally model your objects using appropriate 3D scanners and specialized software systems. Or we can scan them and yourselves and produce your bust or coloured full body scan!

To do this they use a camera to capture the image of what they need. They then process and work on it in their software packages to produce a working computer 3D model making any adjustments or corrections, and render a cage ready for printing.

Once it's ready they move on to the printing. This is done using a Form 2 SLA 3D printer, at 25 microns (the lower



the better). 25 microns is very good, producing a smooth finish ideal for painting. After this is done you should be left with a perfect smaller scale representation of the original. As you can see from the picture, it is a faithful representation of his big brother.

Although I am a fan of the large scale version, it is too daunting for me to paint, but the smaller scale version is perfect for the painter like me. That isn't to say there isn't a place for the larger version and I can recommend both versions for different reasons. Saying that here is a picture that Giorgos sent from MarvixF Models of both versions painted and standing side by side, so you can see what can be done with both versions and see the sheer size comparisons.

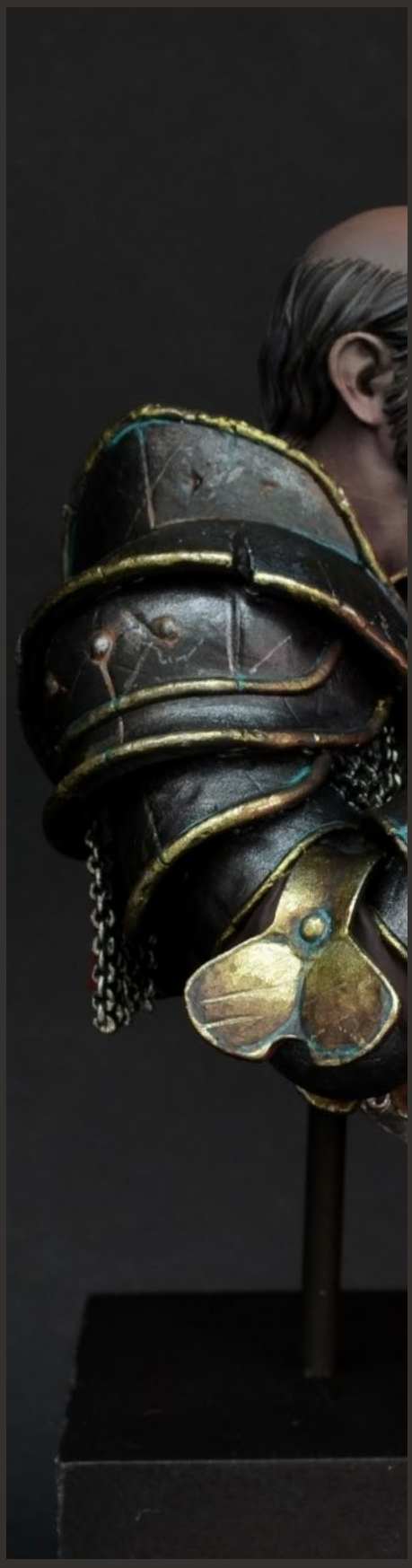
You can also see more of Giorgos' work on his facebook page, too. Just look up Giorgos Tsougkouzidis.

& PUTTY PAINT

Uther, Light of the Realm

Painted by Alex Varela

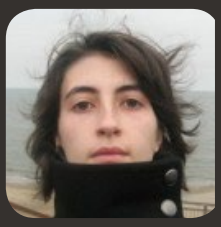
PLUS



& PUTTY PAINT

Sacrifice

Converted & painted by Marina 'Ringil' Aynagoz



PLUS

This is my third bust and I'm still in love with it! At first, I really liked the Sacrifice bust sculpted by Pedro Fernández Ramos and it's amazing! But, I wanted to make it more special, so I'm thankful to Ravenswood for the idea with the nimbus (Halo) and belly.

I took it with some another works to Hussar 2016 and it was very fun to finish it (with a headache) in the hotel. Sacrifice took 3rd place in the Bust category.

You can see more pictures and some W.I.P's on the Serpentarium blog as usual.

P.S. I will sell this bust, but will be ready to give it away only after Monte San Savino 2017 (or at MSS).

PUTTY & PAINT

Medieval Footman

Painted by Sergey Popovichenko

PLUS

‘Medieval Footman’

Altores Studio B-012

1:10 Resin kit

Sculptor Alexander Deryabin

by Davide Rainone

Details

Price:	€38
Scale:	1/10th
Material:	Resin

Available from

www.bestsoldiers.com

BestSoldiers' Eastern Viking

During the last Monte San Savino Show, the Italian company BestSoldiers, run by Marco Ganghini, previewed its new releases for the next few months. Among them, there was this very interesting model, the 'Eastern Viking'. Sergey Popovichenko has painted an extremely nice box art emphasising the bust's great points.

The resin kit comes in 2 parts: the whole bust is in one piece and an optional nose guard to glue to the helmet. Being just one piece, there is not much to say about how different pieces join together, because there are none at all except for the nose guard that joins perfectly with a rivet on the helmet thanks to a little hole on its back.

The bust is approximately 7cm tall and the resin cast is very good. There are a few very thin lines to scrape off using your craft knife. I suggest doing it this way because the resin is soft and your craft knife is a useful tool for remove some of the transparent resin films you sometimes get down a mould join. The only thing that requires more attention is removing the injection point under the base, beneath the subject's gambeson. In addition to this aspect, there are no air bubbles or flaws.

This brings me to another point; there is no plinth for the bust. So, the options to show the bust on a base are two: fixing it by placing the gambeson's flat edge directly in contact with the plinth, or drilling a hole under the shoulders and using either a rod or tube to lift it above the plinth.

The details on the sculpture are nice. The fur is well organized; it is not a mess of clumps. The chain mail is very, very good. It suggests its weight, but at the same time follows the shoulders and fur's volumes giving a nice movement sensation. The conical helmet has different metal overlaps that can be painted differently giving the bust more chromatic variety.

The thick leather thongs and the gambeson are detailed enough to suggest their materials as well as their consistency.

Finally, the bust's main aspect: the face and his battle cry expression. The face and neck are well detailed and can be good for a healthy warrior as well as for a more aged man. His facial expression is very interesting and his head torsion gives a lot of dynamism to a static bust. Indeed, this is the bust's core aspect and what inspires me to place it in at least 3 or 4 different kinds of situations I can imagine when deciding on the final pain scheme.

My opinion is that this bust is very good as a didactic model for beginners, because it allows the painter to practice with different kinds of materials while harmonizing all the elements in a proper scene. The scale is also good because it is not too big and has large areas to fill, but not too small to prevent the painter from trying some textures. For more experienced painters, it suggests several ambient situations to place it, so the challenge could be to try to make the viewer understand the narrative from the paint work...

In conclusion, my opinion is that this is a very nice bust which promises many hours of fun paint work. It's good for every level of painter and it represents a good model to practice many different techniques. I am curious to see some more painted versions in the future!

MINIATURES ARTWORK GROUP

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Exhibition of Miniatures & Tabletop Terrain

Agram

23rd February - 05th March 2017

Vladimir Horvat Gallery
Trg žrtava fašizma 14
Zagreb, Croatia

POST-APOCALYPTIC DIORAMA

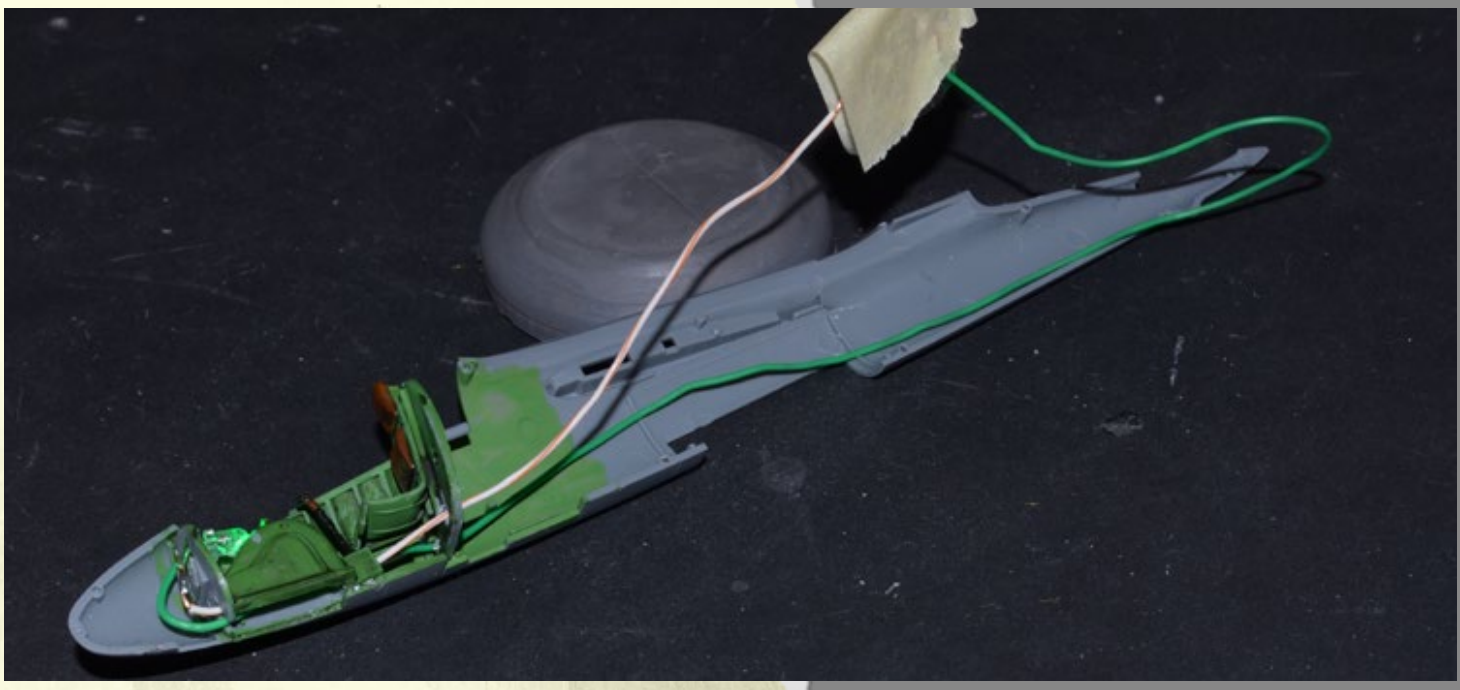
Step by Step Part 7

by Marko Paunovic

In this issue, I'll finish the wiring of the car/plane and hide all the wiring. I'll also seal the LED inside the cockpit so only the dashboard will light up. Once I'm happy with the wiring, I'll close the fuselage and add the engine and the wings which I'll cut off once they are firmly in place. Afterwards it's my intention to deal with the undercarriage of the plane, which will finally turn it into a car.

Last time, I dry fitted the green LED inside the cockpit. I tried out several positions and I was semi-happy with two and happy with one. However, that variant would provide the most trouble when I bend the wires but also when I try to make a housing for the LED so the green light shines only through the dashboard. This is why I again tried out all the positions in the hope of finding another place to put the LED. As this truly proved to be fiddly, I decided to give it a break. I took the dashboard with the dials drilled out and decided to add some Vallejo Still Water droplets into each hole. This way, I'll have the glass dials on my dashboard. I left it to dry next to a heater fan and within half an hour it was cured.

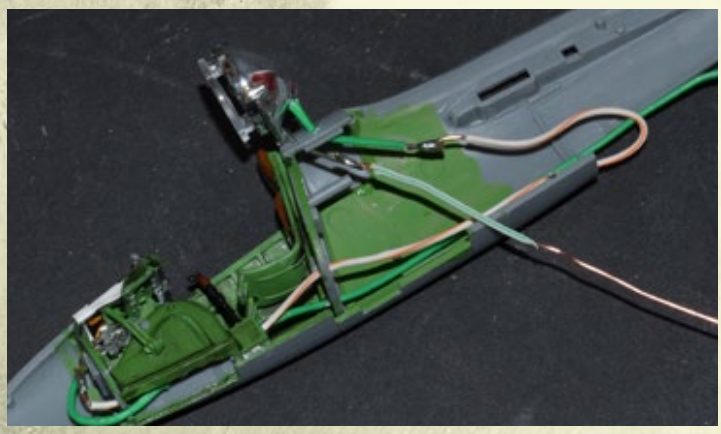
Again, I turned my focus on the cockpit green LED and decided things might be a bit easier if I soldered some wires to the LED, as it would give me extra wire to work with. Making sure of the positive and negative markings for the pins, I soldered some wire. I also cut the pins to different lengths so that the soldered connections weren't close to each other and apart from the solder I made sure all other parts of the wires were insulated. This way, no matter how I twist or turn the wires, there will never be a short circuit. With the soldering done, I decided where I would put the green LED and I glued it to the cockpit. Carefully, I placed the wires in their respective correct positions and added just a dab of superglue to fix them in place.

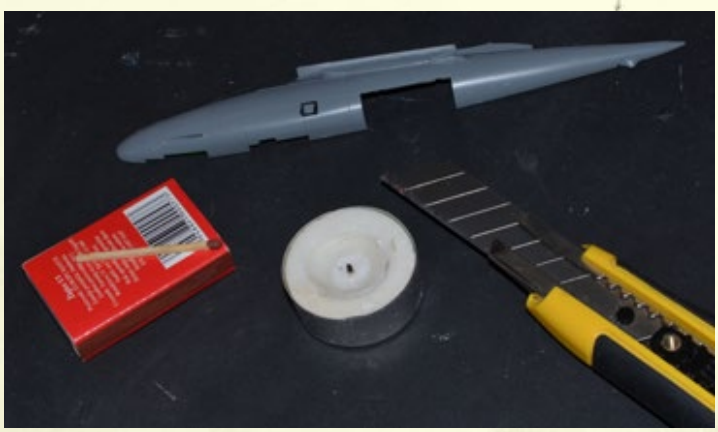


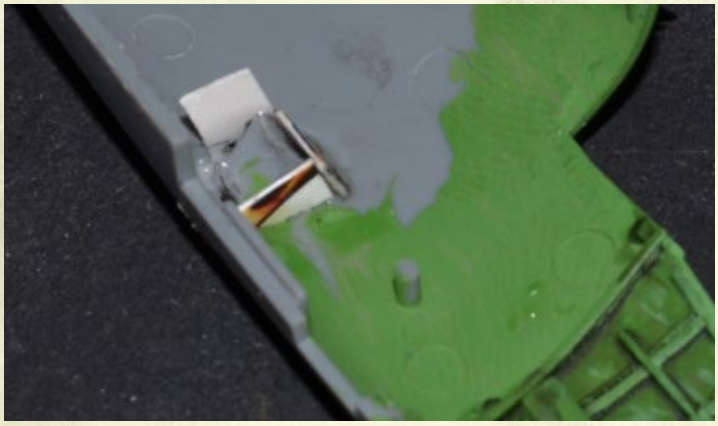
I was nearing the time to close the fuselage. Before I did, though, I had to make the housing for the green LED so it wouldn't shine all over my fuselage. I was debating whether to use plasticard, thin balsa wood or some other material. In the end, I decided to go with the simplest variant. I used a 140g piece of paper. Since the fuselage is curved in all possible manners, I decided to use the paper as it is the easiest to bend and using my small (used to be nail) scissors I could easily cut my desired design. After a bit of trial and error, I finally had my pieces that I painted simply black and glued in place.

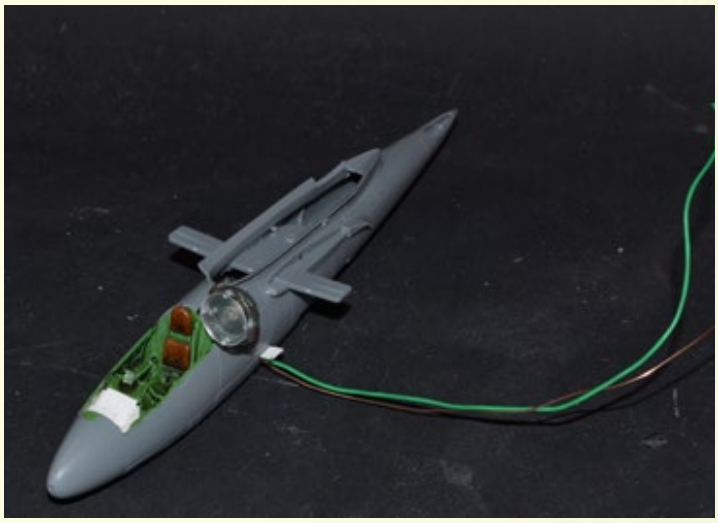
Now the cockpit with my paper LED housing was glued to one side of the fuselage and my wires ran from the front to the back of the (still) plane. I needed to add the search light that I built last time to the back and above the cockpit. Since the green cockpit LED will be on the same serial line as the search light I connected the – pin of the cockpit LED to the + pin of the search light LED. The + pin of the cockpit LED and the – pin of the searchlight LED would be the two wires going from the would-be car and I needed to hide them somehow. This provided quite a big headache for me and in the end I decided to cut a hole in the fuselage and make a socket. I would then use the wires as cables on the diorama that connect the car to the battery on the ground.

Upon inspecting the fuselage and the details embossed on it, I picked a suitable panel and using a hot scalpel blade that I heated on a candle, I cut the hole. Using the piece I cut and some extra plasticard, I made a socket inside the fuselage and I just threaded the wires through the hole. I could finally close the two halves of the fuselage.

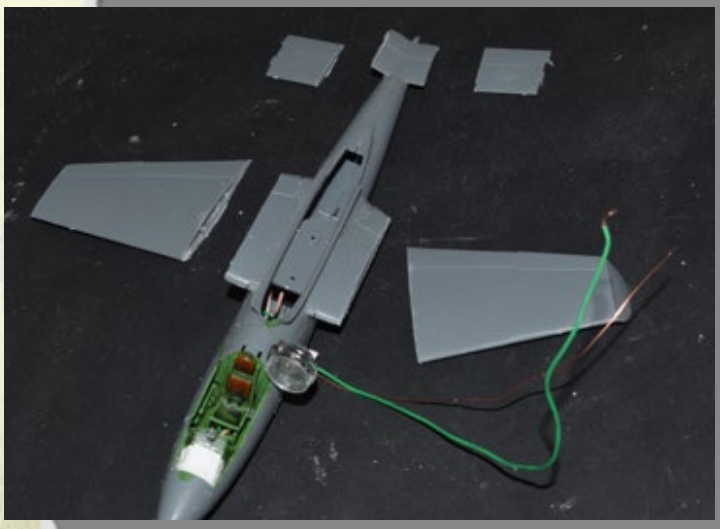


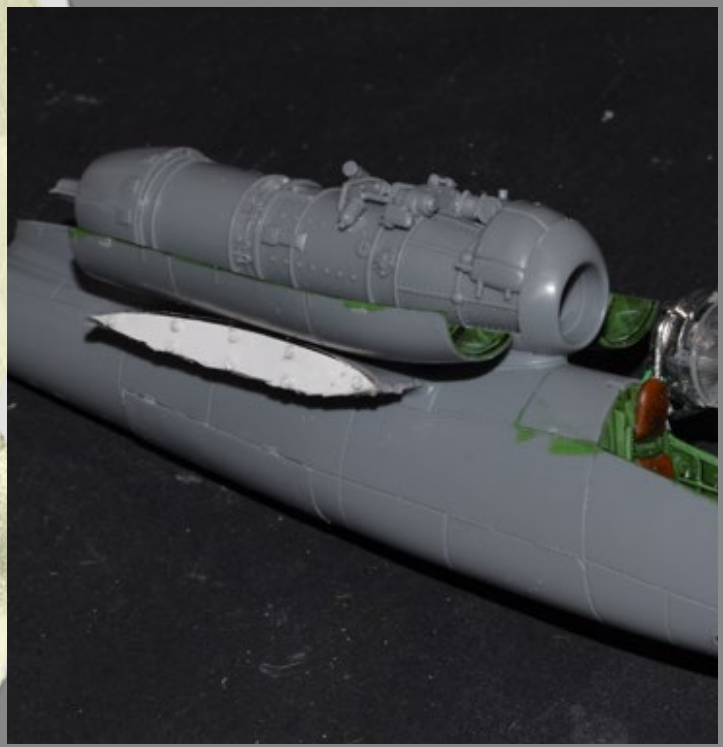




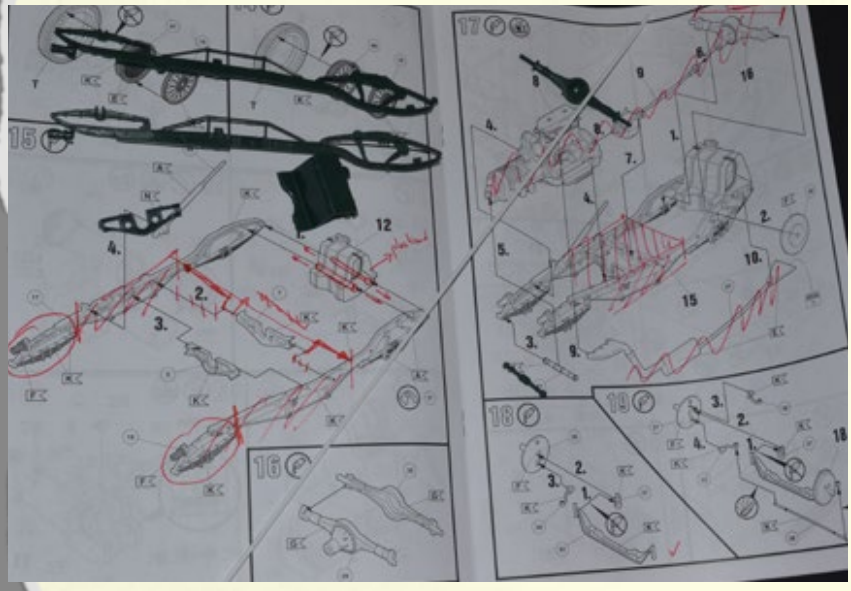


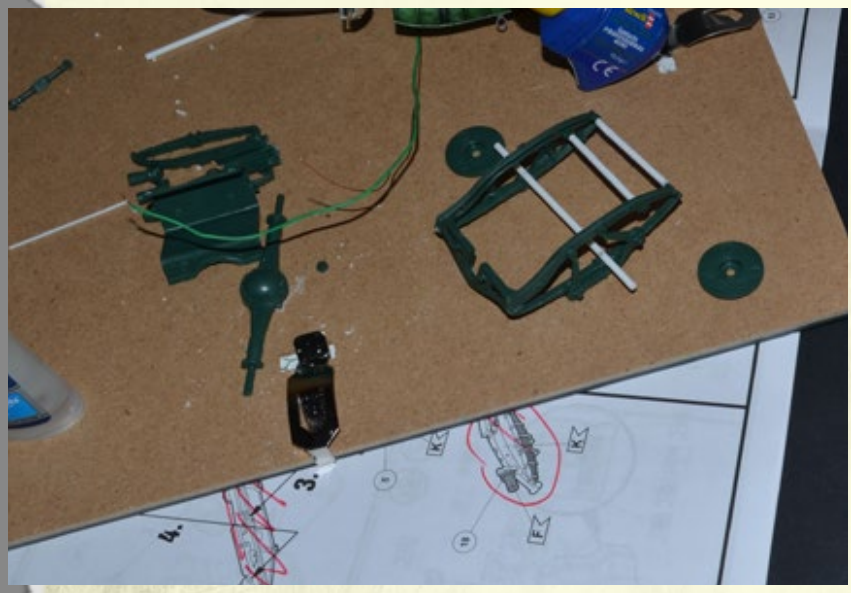
Once the fuselage was assembled, I added the wings and the engine following the instructions from the Tamiya kit. When the wings were in place, I cut them about 5mm from the fuselage which left me with two holes in the wings' cross-sections. I closed them off using some thin plasticard. Using 1mm plasticard rod, I made some rivets and I glued those as well.



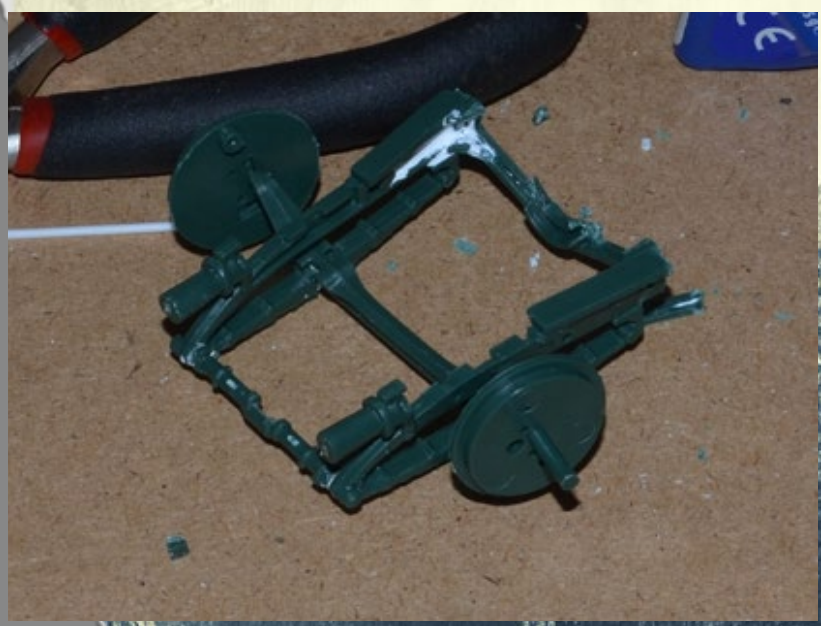


It was now time to turn my attention to the suspension, axles and wheels, so once again I turned to the Revell 1:24 kit of Bentley 4,5l Blower. However, to accommodate parts of this kit to the He-162 fuselage it would require quite a lot of planning, as it would not be prudent to jump in with my scalpel blade and start cutting away bits and pieces in the hope that it would fit. So the first thing I did was take the instruction manual and I familiarised myself with how the original car kit was conceptualised. The first idea I had was to make my own suspension with proper springs made from cheap pens (4 of them) and hydraulic pistons made from 1mm and 2mm plasticard rods. However, upon careful examination of the instruction manual, I came to the conclusion that the original Bentley suspensions (basically, leaf springs that were used on horse drawn carriages) would work great on this kit. I decided to cut the left and the right side of the undercarriage in two places so I would have two front and two back suspensions. I first decided to do the back suspension, as it seemed the easier of the two; it didn't require steering and, as my vehicle was jet powered (as opposed to the rear wheel drive of the Bentley), didn't require power transmission. I had to make a spacer from 2mm thick plasticard rods (2 of them) and I glued the rear suspension together. I then used the rear drive of the Bentley to measure the exact length of the rear axle that I needed to make (also) from 2mm plasticard. Following the instructions, I added the backside of the drum of the brakes.

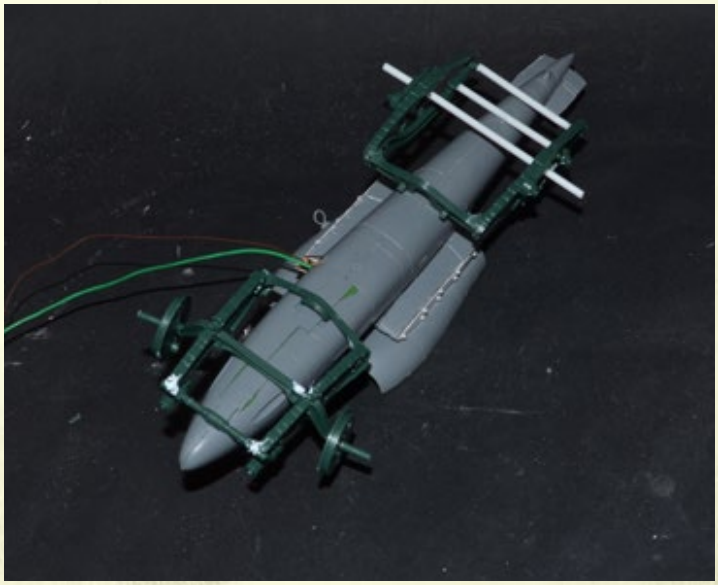


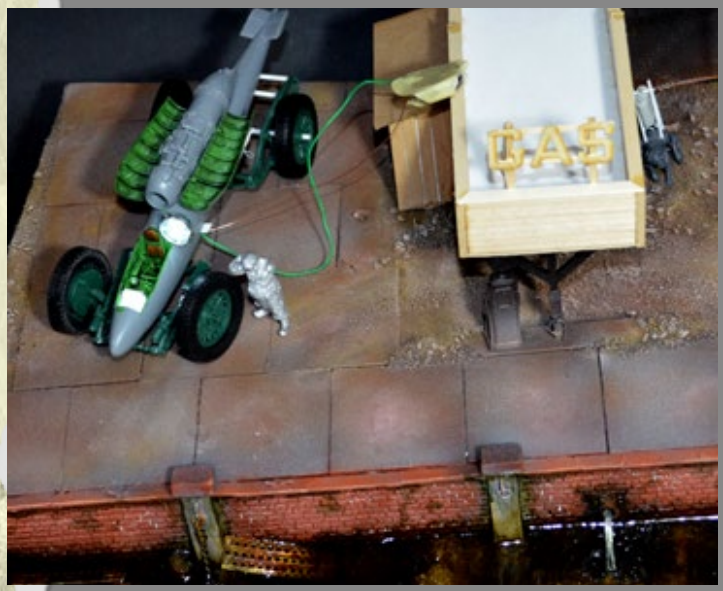


I then thought about assembling the four wheels which (according to the instruction manual) proved to be simple, but I soon dropped the idea because the wheels needed to be painted first. Due to the design, as they were made from two spoked halves, painting them assembled would be a pain. Also, if I added the rubber tires it would be next to impossible to paint properly. However, I did get them off the sprues and I tried dry fitting them and they proved sturdy enough for me to be able to measure the height of the suspension and the exact position of the axles with respect to the plane fuselage. But I'm getting ahead of myself. When the wheels were done, I then proceeded to make the front axle with the suspension. Using the suspension I cut earlier and some spacers, I connected the left and right front suspension together and simply following the instruction manual, I added the steering assembly.



I now had my two suspensions (front and rear) and I needed to fix it to the airplane. Originally, I had the following idea: Using plasticard rods (1 and 2 mm diameter) I would make a construction that would hold the suspension in place. However, in order for my suspensions to be centred, I would make a mock up holder for the suspension that was glued directly to the middle of each suspension. Once the suspension was fixed, I could measure each beam to exact length. Once all the beams were in place, I could remove the middle mock up holders. Fortunately, when I added the wheels and dry fitted the suspension placed onto the fuselage, it proved to be the right height, so I proceeded to simply glue it in place.





Make sure you join me next time when I add the suspension struts and add the steering column. Also there will be a lot of painting on both the car and the garage. Until then, as always, if you have any questions feel free to ask us at: terrain@figurepaintermagazine.co.uk.

Nuts Planet's Belford and Advanced Guard

This month we have another joint review from Nuts Planet. I couldn't decide which one to review so I thought – hell! Let's give you both to look at...you lucky people.

Belford

Price:	£52/€60/$65
Scale:	1/24th
Material:	Resin

Available from

www.nutsplanet.com

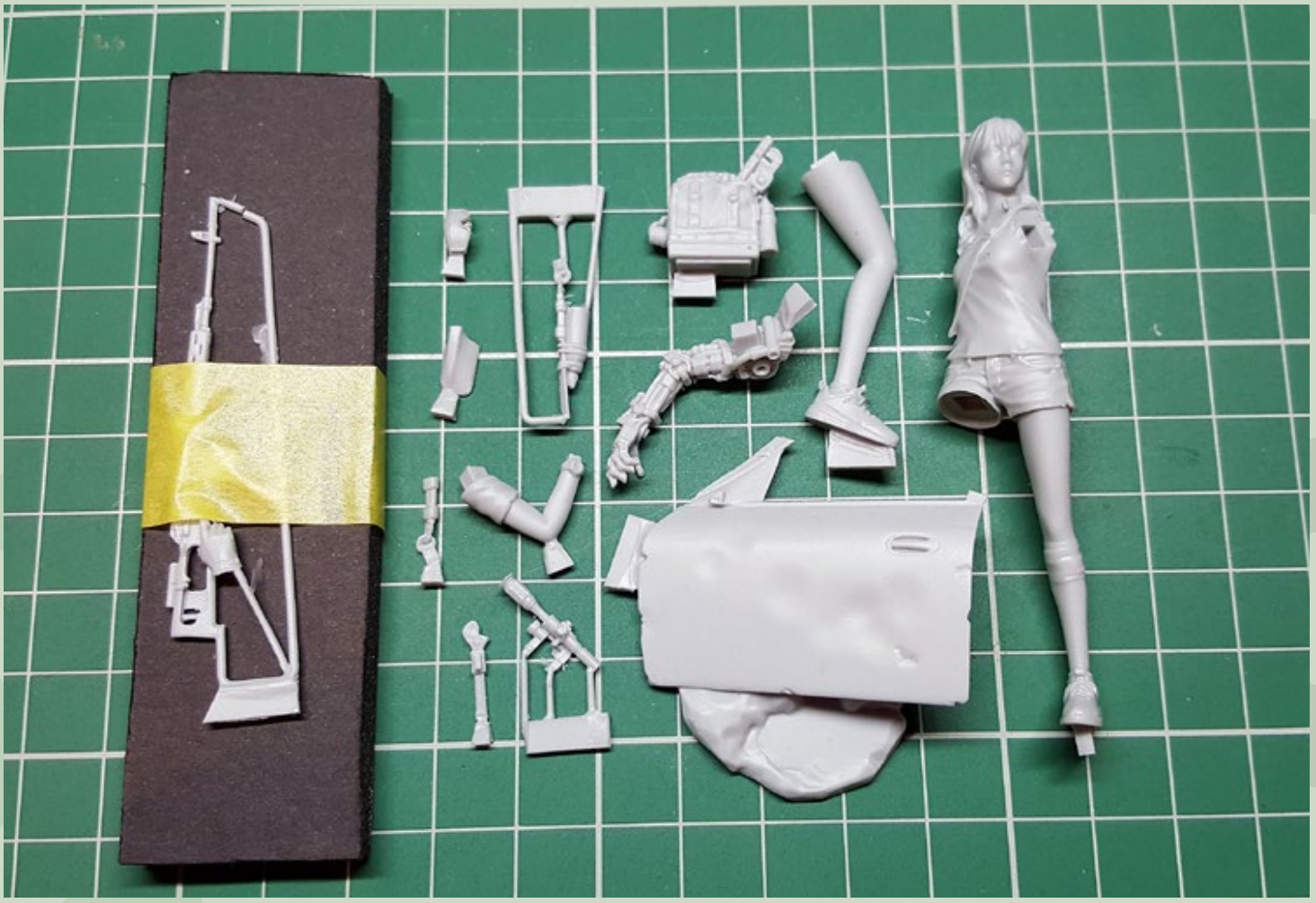
Belford

First up is this little lady Belford.

Ok, let's get the obligatory out of the way, the packaging. You get the lovely crisp blue box with exactly what you get inside seen on the outside, but this time beautifully painted by the uber talented Francesco Farabi. Hopefully, this will be the first of many collaborations between Nuts Planet and Francesco.

On opening the box, you get something slightly different. Inside is Belford's rifle that looks a bit like a Russian Dragunov sniper rifle to me, which caught my eye first. Now this is delicate and I was very pleased to see NP had taped this to a piece of foam card so it won't bend and break; they have even folded the tape over on the back to give you easy lift tab. Every little touch! This is accompanied with 2 small bags of pieces placed onto the second layer which has the main parts of Belford and a piece of scenery for the base.

Once you have everything out, she comes as a 13 piece kit, with – I have to say, some of the most delicate pieces I have seen so far from NP. Note: I have used 'delicate' again. This will be a theme throughout her review, as every aspect of her is so finely cast. The small parts carry amazing detail for being so, well...delicate. 😊



I scrutinized this model all over and for the first time in a long while, I found a mould line on a NP release. It wasn't large at all and a quick rub with some 1200 grade wet n dry and it was gone.

Right, let's get the gates and sprues removed and have a look of how she goes together. As you can see from the pictures, her fit is fantastic with each lug going perfectly in place, bearing in mind this is my usual Blu-Tak dry fit.

The bits may be delicate, but they are not fiddly to put together. Once assembled, the only thing that my eye got a bit stuck on is her raised leg position. The angle looks a little strange, but yet she stands OK. It may be just me, but I thought it may be worth a mention. With the help of a hairdryer, this can be changed in seconds. The Trigger series is also becoming known for its fantastic bases. This one is no different, if a bit more understated. She stands proudly observing the landscape on a car door. This is simple, yet effective.

Joo Heum Yoon has brought another solid release to the Trigger series. Belford is different enough to be her own character, but in keeping with the style to fit well in the line.

Advance Guard

Price:	£57/€70/$67
Scale:	1/24th
Material:	Resin

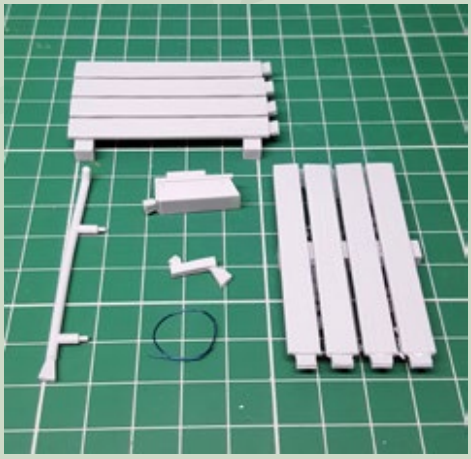
Available from

www.nutsplanet.com

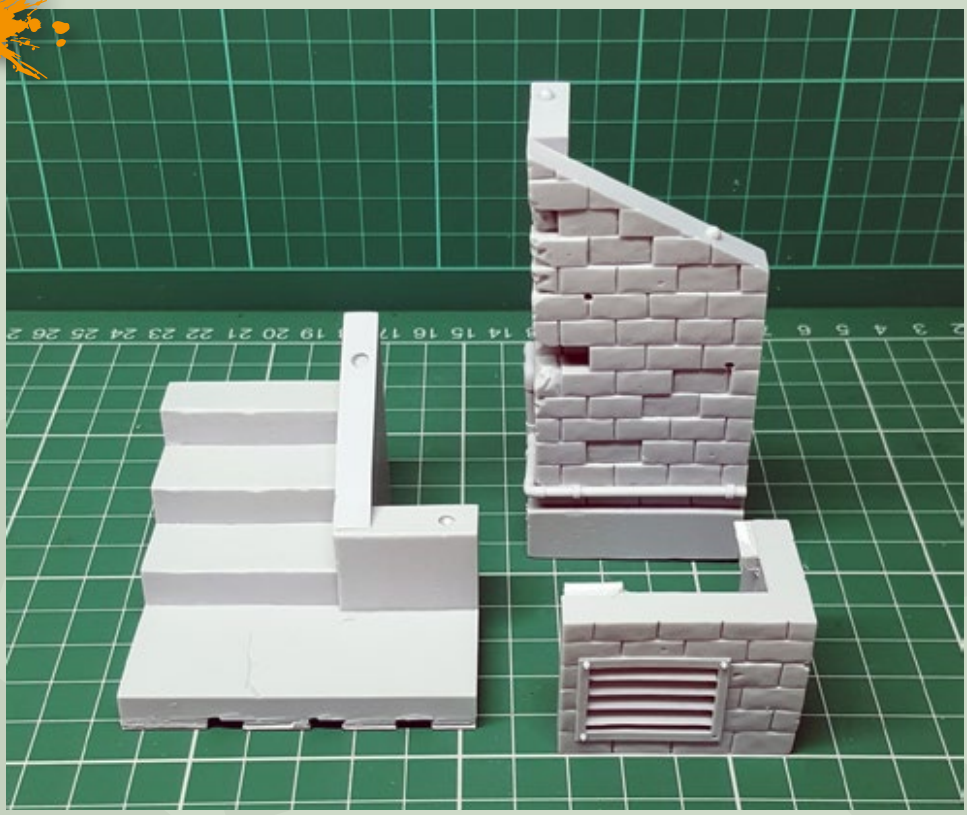
Advance Guard

As you can see from the very first picture the packaging is exactly the same, so I won't dwell on presentation/quality. The one thing I will mention when I first picked up Advance was the weight! Now this is a 100% resin set and it came in at over 210g, so you know this is going to be a hefty piece of kit.

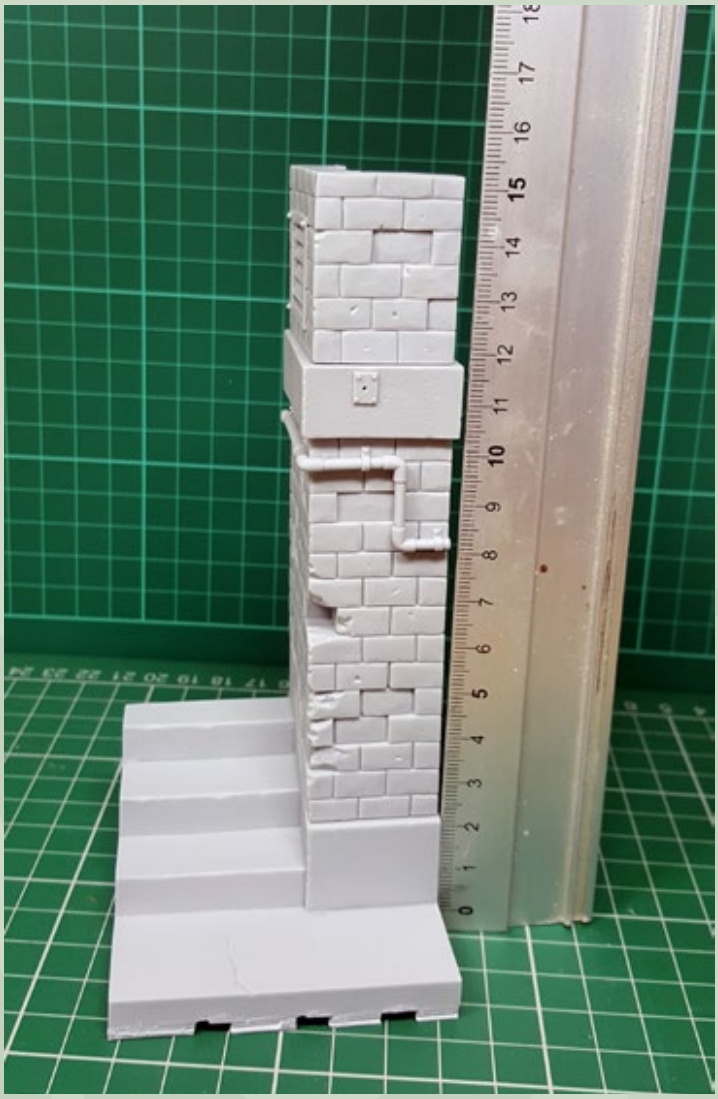
On opening the box and looking at the contents, you can see where that weight came from; there are no less than 16 pieces in the kit, including the very impressive base.



In fact, the base is so big in this kit I took 2 pictures for the base and its accompanying parts. This leaves the figure to take up the rest with no less than 7 parts. Also, I don't recall two different sculptors working on the same piece for Nuts Planet before. The guard was sculpted by Joo Heum Yoon (who else!) And the base, sculpted by Ki Yeol Yoon, also indecently painted this piece to his usual high standard.



OK, first I'll look at the base in more detail. The main stay comes in 4 parts as you can see and these build up to be a pretty impressive height, coming just under 150mm. I did a quick placement and the fit was excellent straight out of the box. No work whatsoever was



needed for this, although for the final fit the gates at the bottom front of the base will need to be removed with my fret saw.

Of course, there are some more ancillaries to go on the base—5 in fact. There is a two part pallet, a two part camera and a handrail, so even the base is a lovely build. I will fit these on during the final dry fit.

OK, onto the figure that is no less impressive. This guy comes in no less than 7 parts as shown earlier. Right, let's get the negative (if you can call it that) out of the way, as it's the only one. You can see in the close-up there is a mould line and that was the only one on the model. Yes, there was a little thin bit of flash on the gun and pallet, but I don't personally count that as it seems to come off as you remove the gates. The mould line, however, will take 5 minutes of your time so I thought it worth mentioning.

The Guard has a wealth of detail which I will show in the final build. Nuts Planet has continued their Division themed series with this latest release. In fact a good friend of FPM, Peter Muller of Next Step Painting, has converted the figure and added a great amount of work to turn it into an even more impressive diorama of an agent roaming the Dark Zone from the game.

Ok, let's look at the build.

All the basing parts fit nicely. The only thing I had to do was glue the camera, as it just wouldn't Blu-Tak together, so it needed a bit of glue. Apart from that, it all went together with Blu-Tak. The figure goes together very well with all plugs, as usual, guiding you so you can't get it wrong; then again it's all pretty obvious— arms, head, etc. The night vision goggles are a great touch and fit nicely into place. The Guard is beautifully detailed, as you would come to expect. The keen eyed amongst you will notice I didn't use the piece of wire in the dry fit as it is used for the strap of the assault rifle, but as I was using Blu-Tak I didn't feel I needed to add it at this time. The whole piece goes together very nicely and the composition is great. You can imagine him looking out for a Rioter, Burner or Riker on his mission and he just oozes atmosphere.

Very much like last month, we have two strong releases in Belford and Advance Guard, but out of the two, my pick is Advance Guard. Not just for the complexity of the kit or my love of the game, The Division. I think he is a more engrossing piece with lots of scope for converting and painting. Plus, as I said last month with Shield and Devastator Victor, they were my favourite Trigger releases to date. Advance Guard carries on with this particular series within the Trigger range. I'm still holding out for some zombies. Yeah, I know I said this last month and it is cliché, but I think Nuts Planet zombies would be awesome!

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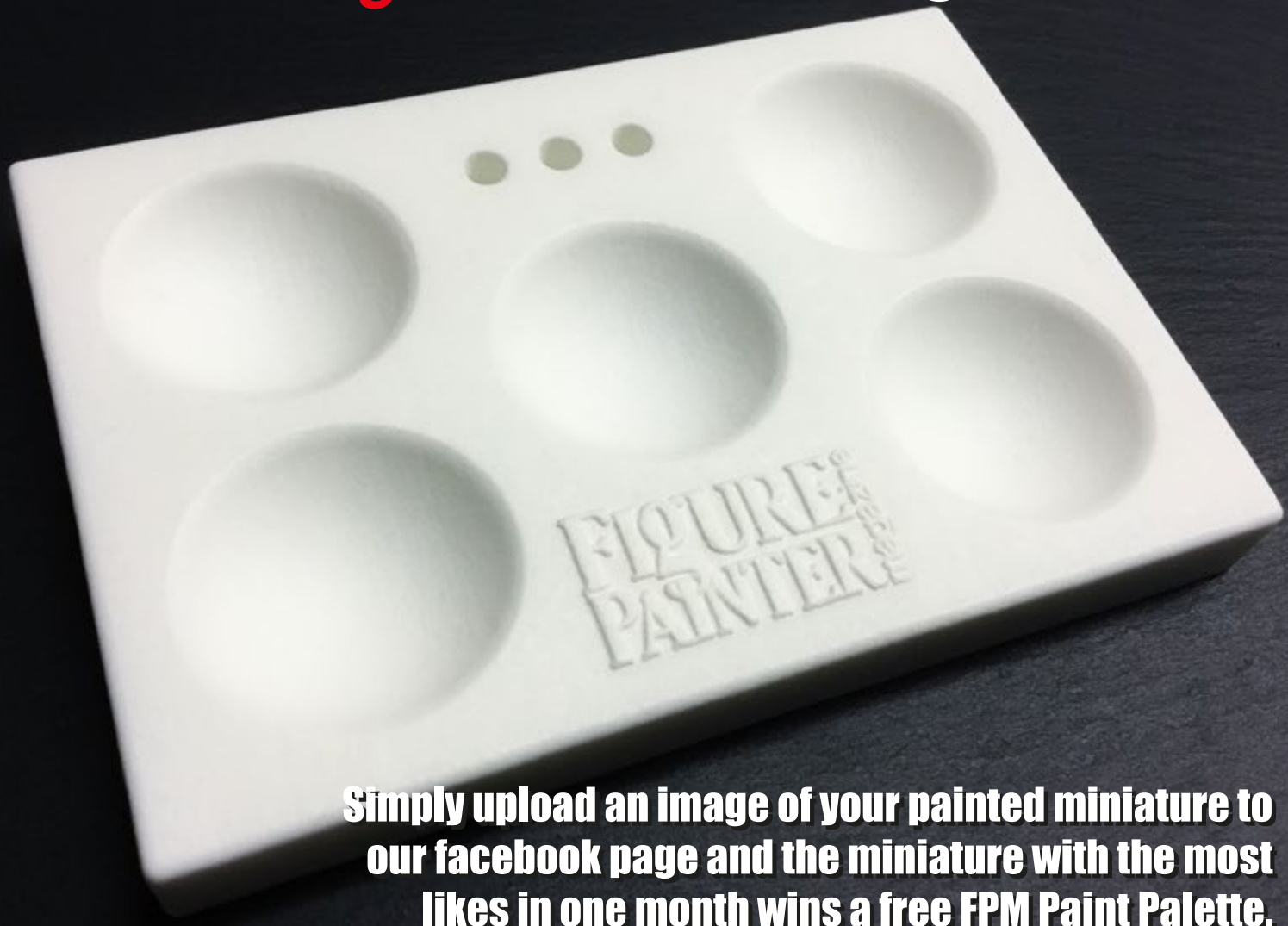

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